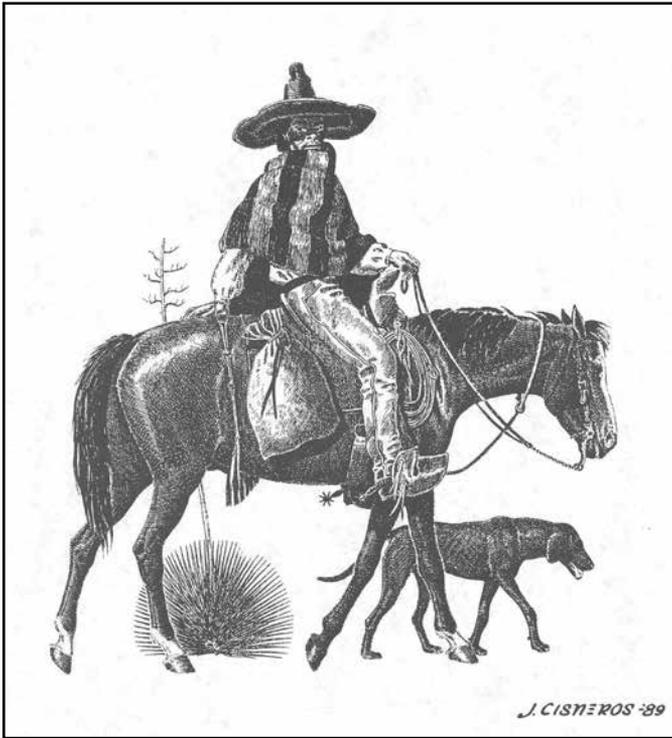


# SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW



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## SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW

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## *The President's Message*

# HISTORY CLOSE TO THE SOURCE

by **Linda G. Harris**

**W**hat charms us about history? It's not the battle, but the soldier. And not the ranch, but the cowboy, and the dam builder, and the farmer, and the merchant. It is the history of their sometimes very daily lives that intrigues us. Often, that daily, personal side of history goes untold, either because it is neither bold enough nor unique enough to warrant greater attention. But it is these bits and pieces of local history that someday will serve as a source to historians who will use them to lure us into learning the larger lesson.

The most logical place to collect these bits and pieces is in a journal, or as we have decided to name ours, the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*. Although it had long been the society's goal to sponsor such a publication,

the goal began to take on reality in the summer of 1992 when it was listed in the society's Long Range Plan. Then in the summer of 1993 Martin and Doris Gemoets agreed to spearhead the effort. They formed an editorial committee and called upon Lillian Collingwood for advice. The gracious and capable editor of the El Paso Historical Society's *Password* met with the committee, sharing her experience and answering questions.

By fall guidelines had been set, an editor named, and a call for papers issued. After the Oct. 31 deadline, all submissions were circulated to committee members who evaluated each paper. The committee then met and jointly selected those papers to be published Jan. 29, 1994, the day of the society's annual awards banquet.

The papers published in this premiere issue cross both centuries and cultures in representing our local history. On these pages is the touching story of a hometown boy of Japanese ancestry whose name ended up on a chile variety, and two articles about generals, one in each century. Articles about the struggles of a farm family and the ingenuity of an educator are balanced with a whimsical account of an early-day close call with an Apache. Readers also will learn the history of Jornada del Muerto as well as the back-grounds of two of our historic homes. Reviews of two books on very different subjects—buffalo soldiers and an astronomer—complete the issue.

With this first issue of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* begins the chronicle of our region's local history. This is history close to its source, lively and fascinating.

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**LINDA G. HARRIS** *has worked in public relations and for nine years held writing positions at New Mexico State University. She is the author of Las Cruces: An Illustrated History.*

# **The Jornada del Muerto** *Staying Alive on the Trail of Death*

**by Paxton P. Price**

**T**he earliest and the most famous stretch of road in what was eventually to become the continental United States lies in southern New Mexico. The historical trail was established in the latter part of the 16th century and its name and fame still endure. This desert section of primitive highway was, at one time, the busy connection between the Spanish royal kingdom and one of its provincial capitals. It was once the cause of dread to its many travelers, but is now virtually abandoned to peacefully grazing cattle. In colonial times and even until the railroad era, the long journey from Mexico City to Santa Fe involved a trek of many months' duration. Passage over the entire length of El Camino Real, the Royal Highway, was painful enough on horseback, or by carro, carreta or wagon, but traveling this particular stretch over a waterless wasteland was especially dreadful.

There is little wonder why it earned and retained its frightening name: Jornada del Muerto, Journey of Death.<sup>1</sup> This long stretch of trail and wagon tracks was the backdrop for lost lives and property of early explorers, settlers, soldiers, miners and traders of several nationalities. Water, so precious and indispensable to humans and their beasts of burden, was originally non-existent across the length of that part of the Royal Highway. Some travelers had suffered attacks by marauding Indians, but even worse was the prospect of running out of water before reaching the Rio Bravo del Norte—the Rio Grande. Wagon caravans carried extra water barrels and solitary riders equipped them-selves with extra canteens. Travel was very often done at night to reduce the effects of heightened thirst caused by the day’s hot sun and to escape detection by the Indians. Despite these precautions, many humans and animals lost their lives.

It was Franciscan Friar Augustin Rodriguez, a courageous, proselytizing soul, who first entered Nuevo Mexico in 1581 to seek Indian converts to Catholicism. He traveled along the Rio Bravo corridor that leads to the Jornada crossing.<sup>2</sup> Antonio de Espejo followed him the next year on the same route in another attempt to open this part of the Spanish Empire called New Spain. These men are, in fact, credited with giving New Mexico its name.<sup>3</sup> However, it was Juan de Oñate, who first colonized Nuevo Mexico in 1598 and became its first governor, who made the first deep impression on the face of the Jornada.<sup>4</sup> It was he who established the regular route between Mexico City and Santa Fe for the settlers, government officials, traders and military leaders who followed. He crossed the Jornada with 80 wagons, 400 settlers and soldiers, and 7,000 head of cattle. Their dusty, noisy caravan could be seen and heard for many “leagues.” The colonists almost perished of thirst due to lack of familiarity with the terrain. From 1680 to 1693, the old road was closed to commerce during the hiatus in Spanish colonization caused by the Pueblo Revolt and until the re-colonization by Don Diego de Vargas.

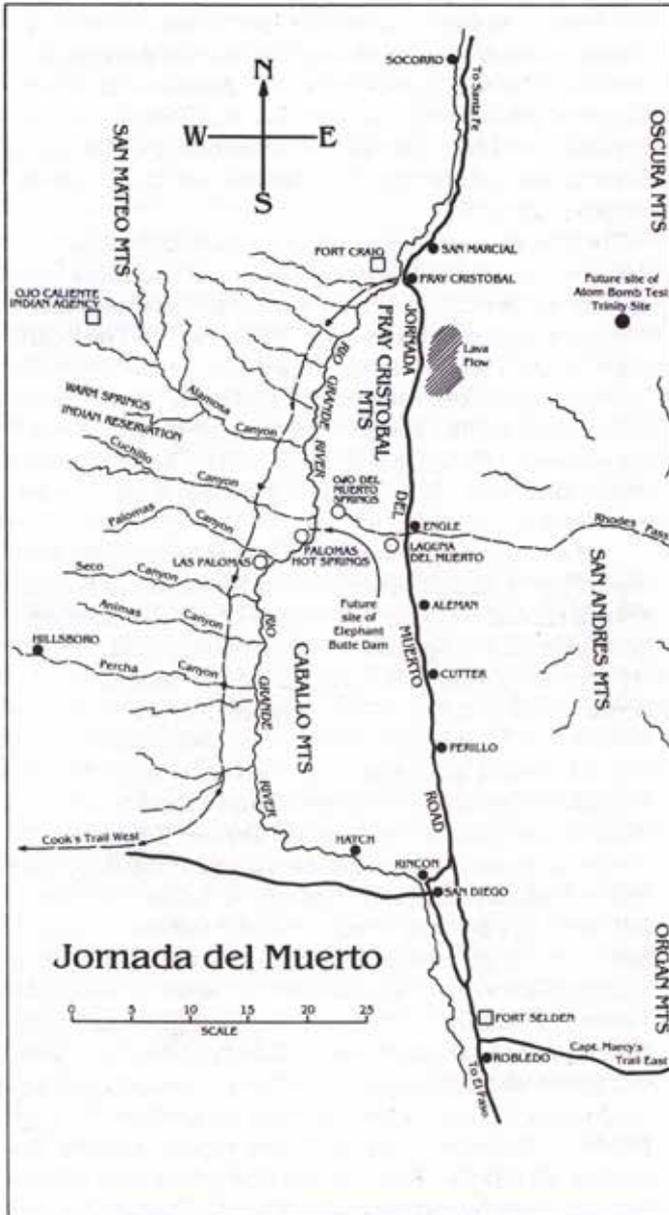
It was not foolhardy courage that prompted the Spaniards to navigate the feared Jornada as they trudged toward the northern pueblos. They found that avoiding the westward bend of the Rio del Norte was a short cut to the Cities of Cibola. Although

traveling along the river always guaranteed access to water, detours like this one over the Jornada were sometimes dictated by impassable terrain. The northbound Spaniards deserted the Rio del Norte a short distance north of the present town of Doña Ana at the Robledo campground and rejoined the river about 90 miles farther upstream at the Fm Cristobal campground, or Valverde. Successive colonizers and traders merely followed the best worn tracks that lay ahead thus fixing the terrible route over a particularly inhospitable section of the Royal Kingdom. Travelers stopped to rest, water and feed their livestock at places that became campgrounds called *parajes*. Oñate's colonizers established and named some 30 individual *parajes*. Not until relatively recent times was the Jornada anything more than an empty sand and rock-strewn wasteland. Shadeless and waterless, it bakes under an almost cloudless sky all year long and supports only cactus, mesquite, greasewood and occasional grass. Visibility extends to many miles as paralleling mountains border the thirty-mile-wide Jornada. Its boundaries on the west are the Fra Cristobal Range and the Caballo mountains; on the east, its limits are marked by the Oscura and the San Andres Mountains.

The Spaniards who first opened the punishing route named it to mark its forbidding challenge and to characterize its potential effect on unwary travelers. Never escaping its dreaded name, the *Jornada del Muerto* endures in literature and on modern maps. Personal accounts<sup>5</sup> written by early traders, soldiers and government officials who followed the route testify to the frightening experiences they endured while crossing the Jornada. Earlier, and especially during the early years of territorial status, surprise attacks by Apaches seeking revenge upon intruders for venturing into what they considered their homeland was the severest threat.<sup>6</sup> Wagon trains required about a week to cover the length of the Jornada. Unburdened horsemen could traverse the desert area in about three days, while Indians traveled faster yet.

Remnants of man, beast and property left on the Jornada landscape — bones bleaching in the sun, crude grave markers, and smashed wagons and stage coaches weathering away—told the final story of those who fell victim to thirst or Indian attack.

As the American intrusion into New Mexico increased after the Mexican War, and accelerated following the Civil War, so



Map from Jornada del Muerto by Brodie Crouch, Arthur H. Clark Co., publisher.

did the troubles multiply. American land claims to the Apaches' traditional hunting ground brought the Indians into conflict with settlers. The vacant and defenseless Jornada was one of the Apaches' principal and easiest raiding areas. Settlers and travelers alike feared Point of Rocks, a few low hills in the south central Jornada, and the Fra Cristóbal's farther north, as prime sites for surprise attacks.

The U. S. military occupation forces that had remained in New Mexico after the Civil War together with the Territorial Militia came to the defense of Jornada travelers. Fort Craig<sup>7</sup> near San Marcial was garrisoned, as was Fort McRae, and Fort Selden at the southern end, to protect settlers and travelers and to try to keep communications open between the northern and southern settlements along the Rio Grande. Soldiers from those forts patrolled the old road. The Apache threat ended in the 1880's when tribal war leaders were captured and the Indians were resettled on reservations.

Many historically prominent figures crossed the Jornada landscape. In addition to the Spanish explorers and colonizers, several famous Mexican governors and generals made the trek north to Santa Fe. Spanish Governor Otermín, however, fled in the opposite direction, bringing his refugee colonists down the Jornada route from Santa Fe to escape the Indian Revolt of 1680. Hundreds of his walking survivors, many of whom were barefoot, succumbed while making the "journey of death." Mexican Governor Manuel Armijo escaped down the old road from the Army of the West led by General Stephen Kearney in 1846. American explorer Lieutenant Zebulon Pike, the discoverer of Pike's Peak near Colorado Springs, Colorado, traveled as a prisoner down the trail. Traders Samuel and James Magoffin<sup>8</sup> and Josiah Gregg<sup>9</sup> endured its tortures. Army Generals Sterling Price and Henry Sibley trod the old road. Mesilla's own Colonel Albert J. Fountain,<sup>10</sup> a one-time Indian fighter and political leader, fought skirmishes with the Indians in the Fra Cristóbal's. The feared Warm Springs Apache Chief Victorio dashed across the Jornada in 1879 in his last break for freedom.<sup>11</sup> Eugene Manlove Rhodes,<sup>12</sup> a horseman and popular western writer ranched near Engle. Many others, both famous and infamous, have followed the historic trail. While water could be found on the Jornada in

holes, depressions and springs located some distance from the old road during rainy periods, these spots were neither dependable nor close enough year around for traveler relief from the heat, dust and thirst. Therefore, the hero of the Jornada who finally provided comfort for the weary, parched or unprepared travelers was John Martin. In 1868, he dug a water well at Aleman, about midway on the torturous road, to a depth of 164 feet. Territorial newspapers of the day praised him and referred to him as the “King of the Jornada” Such a precious oasis as the one he constructed at the well deserved the protection of a detachment of soldiers, which was provided. Martin developed his bonanza by adding a hotel, a stage station, a post office and government forage station. This new hospice was so universally acclaimed throughout the Territory that a bill was introduced in Congress (which failed to pass) to reward Martin with a land grant for his remarkable achievement. He sold out eight years later and moved to Santa Fe where he died shortly thereafter.<sup>13</sup>

That the original trail over the Jornada laid down by the Spanish constituted the best route north to Santa Fe was confirmed by subsequent railroad surveyors. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad laid its line to El Paso across the Jornada in 1881. After all, Martin proved that water was to be had from wells that could supply their steam engines. One of the stops along the tracks included Aleman. Cattlemen who had settled in that wide basin in the last half of the 19th century needed cattle pens along the railroad to facilitate shipment of their Herefords to eastern markets.

The Jornada del Muerto — a treacherous highway for nearly 400 years — was replaced as a travel route about 1920 by an automobile road graded in on the western side of the big river. That historical change left the old dusty trail to fade with time and erosion. The entire expanse still bears its name, but it is now occupied by cattle ranches and a few dry-land farms. Very recently, near Engle, extensive vineyards have been planted which will be supported eventually by a winery.

The name “journey of death” lost its original meaning when the new road went around it. Its ominous ring took

on new significance, however, when atomic power was introduced in the 1940's because the upper right hand corner of the wasteland harbors Trinity Site,<sup>14</sup> near Oscura Peak, where the first atomic bomb was tested in 1945.

**PAXTON P. PRICE** *has roots in the Mesilla Valley where he attended public schools. He later graduated from the New Mexico Military Institute in Roswell and from the University of Tennessee. His professional career was mainly spent as Missouri State Librarian and as Director of the St. Louis Public Library. He is an author and editor who has made many contributions to library and historical publications. He is a former president of the Doña Ana County Historical Society and now resides in Las Vegas, New Mexico.*

#### NOTES

- 1 Hubert Howe Bancroft. *History of Arizona and New Mexico: 1530-1883*. Albuquerque, Horn and Wallace, 1962. Reprint. p. 187.
- 2 Ralph Emerson Twitchell. *The Leading Facts of New Mexico History*. Cedar Rapids, IA., The Torch Press, 1911. Volume 1, p. 256.
- 3 (Hubert Howe) Bancrofts Works. *Arizona and New Mexico*. San Francisco, The History Company, 1889. Volume XVII, p. 76.
- 4 *Juan de Onate and the Founding of New Mexico*. Santa Fe, El Palacio Press, 1927 (Historical Society of New Mexico. Publications in History. Volume II, October, 1927, p. 96).
- 5 *Over the Chihuahua and Santa Fe Trails, 1847-48*. Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1981.
- 6 *The Life and Death of Colonel Albert Jennings Fountain*. Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1965, pp. 32, 40-41.
- 7 *Fort Craig*. Pampa, Texas, Pampa Print Shop, 1963.
- 8 Susan Shelby Magoffin. *Down the Santa Fe Trail*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1926. Reprint. p. 196.
- 9 *The Commerce of the Prairies*. Chicago, The Lakeside Press, 1926. Reprint. pp. 238-40.
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 *Victorio and the Mimbres Apaches*. Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1974. p. 218.
- 12 W. H. Hutchinson. *A Bar Cross Man*. Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1956. pp. 19-74.
- 13 Darlis A. Miller. *The California Column in New Mexico*. Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1982. p. 117.
- 14 Lansing Lamont. *Day of Trinity*. New York, New American Library, 1966.

# Early Owners of the Nestor Armijo Home

## *Part I: The Samaniegos of Sonora*

by **John B. Colligan**

**L**ike most properties, the historic Nestor Armijo home on Lohman Street in Las Cruces had prior owners. It did not start out as a two-story dwelling with its thick plastered adobe walls, wide porches, gables and gingerbread, but rather as a small single-story adobe house. The early owners also happened to be persons who would acquire historical importance in Doña Ana County.

What was to become the Nestor Armijo property can be found in the plat for Block 18 of the Las Cruces townsite as early as 1853. The earliest owner of the house and land was a certain Mariano Samaniego, who sold it to John Barncastle on February 9 of that year for \$160. What is puzzling for historians is that there were at least two Mariano Samaniegos who could have been present in the general area at that time. Unfortunately, the deed does not provide



*Amijo House. Courtesy Rio Grande Historical Collections, New Mexico State University.*

a middle initial or name, nor does it include Mariano's mother's surname, either of which would allow positive identification of the Mariano Samaniego in question.

The two Mariano Samaniegos who have been the subject of much historical research are Mariano J. Samaniego and Mariano Gil Samaniego. The fact that both were born in Bavispe, Sonora, Mexico and were undoubtedly related makes the identification of the true owner of the property even more difficult. It is unlikely that it was Mariano J., born to Florentino Samaniego and Josefa Ortiz Delgandoverly likely in 1831. There is strong evidence to support that assumption. Based on his own testimony,<sup>1</sup> he was at *colegio* in Durango from 1845 to 1851 and in Paris pursuing his medical studies at the Sorbonne from 1852 to 1859 under Louis Pasteur. He is also said to have returned to Mexico where he served as a surgeon for the republican forces under General Luis Terrazas. Mariano J. would, therefore, have been absent from southern New Mexico during the years of Samaniego ownership though he had been in the area earlier. His father, Florentino, had been killed in an Apache raid in 1838, and his mother's brother, Cura RamOn Ortiz of El Paso, brought his sister, her son Mariano, and her three daughters to live with or

near the Curain in El Paso. This Renaissance-man priest helped raise his sister's family and obviously encouraged Mariano financially and emotionally to become a doctor.

It is much more probable that Mariano Gil,<sup>2</sup> born on July 26, 1844, to Bartolo Samaniego and Ysabel Luna, was the apparent owner of the Arm i jo home in the 1850's. This Mariano Samaniego was the grandson of Tiburcio Samaniego, an important land-owner in the vicinity of Bavispe where he also served as Magis-trate. Mariano Gil's father was the victim of a cholera epidemic in 1850, and Ysabel took her young family to Corralitos, Chihua-hua, where Bartolo had established a mercantile store, in addition to the one he owned in Bavispe. Ysabel continued to operate the Corralitos store in that small mining center with a population of about 400 located about 160 miles southwest of El Paso. Later Ysabel moved her family to La Mesilla, New Mexico, first settled permanently in 1848 by people whom Cura Ortiz had encouraged to move there. It seems, in fact, likely that the priest encouraged members of both Samaniego families to relocate in the area. Ysabel and her young family were residents of Mesilla by the latter half of 1851 when they were counted in a Mexican census. Francisca is noted as being ten years old; Mariano, seven; Angela, six; and Bartolo, three.<sup>3</sup>

The property sale between Mariano Samaniego and John Barncastle in 1853 when Mariano would have been but nine years old may not seem plausible. It is this writer's considered opinion, however, that, despite his young age, he was probably acting on his mother's behalf for this particular transaction since when Barncastle acquired adjoining property from Benjamin Hanover in 1866, one boundary was the property of Ysabel Luna (de Samaniego), Mariano Gil's mother. She must have retained those holdings from the previous sale of the other parcel to Barncastle in 1853.

Mariano's widowed mother and four or five children subsequently moved from La Mesilla to Albuquerque and, by December 1881, Ysabel was a resident of the Plaza of Tucson.<sup>4</sup>

Earlier, in either Albuquerque or La Mesilla, Mariano's sister, Angela, must have met and married Jesus Armijo, son of the prominent merchant Don Ambrosio Armijo and his first wife, Doña Candelaria Otero of Albuquerque. Jesus and his brother, Perfecto, had a store in Mesilla, as did Ysabel Samaniego. Apparently, Ysabel and her family did not remain in Albuquerque long because she, along with Mariano, Angela and Bartolo are listed in the 1860 Territorial Census as residents of Mesilla, with a servant, Antonio Provencio, age fourteen.<sup>5</sup> Ysabel kept the store in Corralitos and also the one in Mesilla, and both seem to have prospered, since Ysabel had the means to send her son Mariano to St. Louis University where the tuition was \$725.60.

According to St. Louis University records, Mariano Gil was a student there during academic years 1858-59 and 1859-60, and he left the school on July 4, 1860. The type of academic training he received is noted in the 1859-61 *Student Records*.<sup>6</sup> Mariano was in a section of the six-year Classical Course called *Humanities Second Class* and took from a Mr. Patton: Latin and Greek grammar; epistomologic history; English grammar, execution and exercises; Catechism; arithmetic; geography of North America; and history of the United States. Next, he was in the *Second Grammar Class, First Division for "Large Boys."* He and his classmates under Fr. Nogues took English grammar and exercises; orthography; syntax without notes, parsing and elocution; Catechism; history of the United States; geography of North America; and arithmetic including fractions etc. Bills for "Master Mariano Samaniego" were sent to his mother, Doña Ysabel Luna y Samaniego at Las Cruces, and, in 1859, amounted to \$312.15 including tuition, room and board, and miscellaneous other items such as two coats at \$3.50 each, four pants at \$1.00 each, a comb for \$.15 and a charge for a vacation of \$25.00. Haircuts were charged at \$.15, suspenders at \$.50, soap and blacking at \$.15, music lessons at \$6.25 for February, \$4.50 for March, \$4.00 for April, \$4.75 for May and \$5.50 for June.

When he left school on July 4, 1860, Mariano returned

to assist his mother with the family business in Mesilla. He was a Confederate sympathizer, following the lead of James A. Lucas, a Mesilla merchant, who had married Mariano's sister, Francisca, in 1852. At Las Cruces, on May 5, 1868, Mariano married Dolores Aguirre, who was born in Chihuahua on July 11, 1851, the sister of Mariano's childhood friend, Yjinio Aguirre, with whom Mariano had established a freighting business in 1864.<sup>7</sup> Dolores was the daughter of Pedro Aguirre, a member of the powerful Aguirre merchant family of Chihuahua, some of whose members had moved to Las Cruces in 1852. Dolores also had a brother, Pedro Aguirre Jr., who had a freighting business in Las Cruces and then another in Tucson in partnership with Estevan Ochoa.<sup>8</sup>

The year after his marriage, Mariano moved to Tucson where he joined Pedro, who was already established there and prominent in its Hispanic community. Soon, the Samaniego, Aguirre and Ochoa families were all to become financially successful there, based, in the beginning, on their freighting businesses which thrived on government contracts for supplying military forts in the area.<sup>9</sup> Mariano and Dolores were able to enjoy the good life for they attended the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. The good life also had numerous setbacks given the financial losses incurred from hostile Indian attacks on their trains, compounded by the murder of Mariano's brother, Bartolo, in 1881. This led Mariano to abandon the freighting business, but he did operate stage lines from Tucson to Oro Blanco, Aricava and Quijotoa, profiting from government mail contracts.

Mariano Samaniego engaged in mining in the mid-1800's, and had sizeable claims in the Santa Catalina Mountains. He also acquired real property in Tucson and was a partner in the Rillito and Santa Cruz Valley Canal and Irrigation Company which furnished water to the city of Tucson. He entered politics, was a prominent Hispanic Republican, became justice of the peace in 1874, and, in 1877, was elected to the territorial legislature as a representative from Pima County. He served in the legislature in 1881, 1886, and 1888, was a town councilman from 1880

to 1893, a member of the Pima County Board of Supervisors in the late 1890's, and a member of the first Board of Regents of the University of Arizona. He became the acknowledged leader of the Mexican community following the death of Estevan Ochoa, and was known for being able to control the Mexican vote. He also served as President of the Arizona Pioneers Historical Society on several occasions. Mariano died in Tucson on August 7, 1907. His funeral procession was described as being a mile long and the largest in Tucson history to that date. Since they were childless, Mariano left his widow \$26, 625 in real estate and personal property. Dolores Aguirre de Samaniego died in 1920. The couple had raised a nephew, Josp Patton, and three nieces, Guadalupe, Estefanita and Narcissa Patton.

On February 9, 1867, this same prominent and eminently successful Mariano Samaniego, appears to be the one who sold to John D. Bamcastle, when both parties to the transaction were of Las Cruces, for \$160.00, property described as:

...That certain Lot with an adobe House containing four rooms, situated thereon; bounded on the North by a cross street running nearly East and West through said Town; On the South by land belonging to George P. Davis; On the East by Lot owned by Trinidad Lucero, and On the West by Lot formerly the property of Lt. John and now owned by John D. Barncastle: - Said property hereby conveyed being Eighty five (85) varas long and Forty (40) varas wide, (more or less)....<sup>10</sup>

---

**JOHN B. COLLIGAN**, *though a California native, is a descendant of first settlers of New Mexico and currently resides in Las Cruces. He is retired from a business management career and now devotes all his time to historical research which he terms investigative reporting of certain aspects of New Mexico history. His interest in the Nestor Armijo home stems from his marriage to Dolores Gallagher, Don Nestor's great granddaughter and Colligan's third cousin, once removed.*

## NOTES

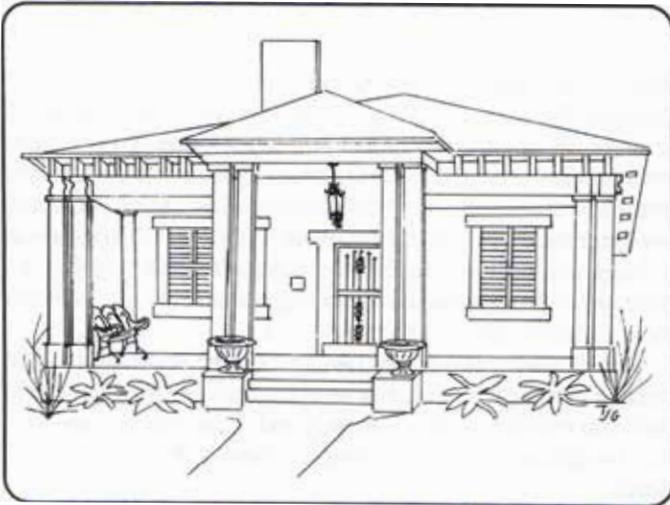
- 1 The deposition concerning the course of the Rio Grande and the Chamizal dispute, given in 1896 by Dr. Samaniego, is courtesy of Mary D. Taylor. The deposition is found in *Department of State Proceedings of the International (Water) Boundary Commission, United States and Mexico, Treaties of 1884 and 1889. Equitable Distribution of the Waters of the Rio Grande. United States Section. Anson Mills, Brigadier General, U.S.A. Retired, Commissioner.* Washington, Government Printing Office, 1903, v. 1, pp. 64-66.
- 2 The name Mariano is common in the Samaniego family to this day. Eduardo Samaniego of Encinitas, California, now in his eighties, can name uncles and cousins all with that given name, and he states that it was repeated in various branches of his family for years.
- 3 Manuel G. Gonzalez, "Mariano G. Samaniego," *The Journal of Arizona History*, Spring 1990, p. 155, fn 3, cites *The L udrez Archives*, Roll 36, Part 2, Book 1 (1851), Frame 0211, Microfilm Publication, University of Texas at El Paso, which is the source of much of the information on Angela Samaniego and her siblings.
- 4 Doña Ana County Deeds, Book 5, pp. 456-57.
- 5 Gonzalez, *Ibid.*, p. 156, fn. 6, cites *1860 Census Population Schedule of New Mexico*, United States Census Reports (Bemalillo, Doña Ana, and Rio Arriba Counties), Microfilm Publications, Roll 712, Part 3, National Archives.
- 6 St. Louis University Archives, v. 133, Bundle 37.
- 7 Goldstein, "Americanization and Mexicanization," pp. 56-57.
- 8 The Aguirre family was founded by Pedro Aguirre . The family had large cattle ranches in Chihuahua and moved to Las Cruces in the 1850's. The eldest son, Epifanio, was born in Chihuahua in 1834. He owned large cattle ranches with his brothers Pedro, Conrado and Yjinio (who had received a liberal education in Pennsylvania) and was involved in freighting and other businesses.
- 9 Goldstein, *Ibid.*, p. 53. "Esteban Ochoa was born in New Mexico in 1831....After receiving his education in the United States (Independence, Missouri) where he learned both business techniques and the English language, he began a general merchandising business in Mesilla, New Mexico, and soon opened other branch stores. His first business partner was Pedro Aguirre, but, after that partnership dissolved, Ochoa seems to have allied himself only with Anglo-Americans."
- 10 Doña Ana County Deeds, Book E., 9 February 1867, pp. 217-218

# The Mark Thompson - David Bronson Home

by Theresa Gerend

**I**t is still possible to take a walk in the Alameda-Depot Historic District of Las Cruces and turn the clock back in time. The district, situated west of Main Street between Alameda Boulevard and the old Santa Fe Depot, remains a viable neighborhood. It once was the suburb of a young Las Cruces and many of its homes are now in the National and State of New Mexico Historic Registers. The houses were built for the most part between 1890 and 1930 in a variety of architectural styles— Gothic, Queen Anne, Georgian, Prairie Style, and Western Stick, — to name a few. Each house has its own story.

The 400 block of West Las Cruces Avenue is an interesting example. All of the homes on the block are in the National Register and all have names attached to them. The house at number 409 carries two family names. In the register, it is called the Mark Thompson house, but in the living memory of long-time residents, it is known as the



*The Mark Thompson Home as illustrated here by Dr. Thomas Gerend, its current owner.*

Bronson house. Both names are correct.

The Thompson/Bronson house was built in 1909. It is a one-story stuccoed adobe with a gracious Western Stick Style front porch. This architectural style was developed in the 1890's and can be recognized by a pitched gabled roof and stick-like roof rafters with box columns. The wooden front windows of the home are double-hung. The house still looks very much like it did at the time it was built.

The land for the home was given to Edith Georgia Thompson by her parents, State Senator and Mrs. Nicholas Galles of Hillsboro on the day she married Mark Thompson. The bridegroom was the District Attorney for Doña Ana County. He was a close personal friend of Albert B. Fall and was at Fall's side during the Teapot Dome trial. As District Attorney, Mark Thompson prosecuted Wayne Brazel, the man who confessed to the murder of Pat Garrett. Wayne Brazel was found not guilty because no one, including Mark Thompson, believed him to be capable of murder. The Thompsons sold the house at number 409 in 1917, possibly because it became too small for their growing family of four children.

In 1923, the house was purchased by the David Bronsons. David Bronson owned the Bronson Printing Company and the *Rio Grande Farmer*, the forerunner of *the Las Cruces Sun-News*. Florence Bronson changed the interior of the house. She loved to entertain, so to accommodate her guests she removed a front bedroom and enlarged the living room. She had wooden beams placed in the ceilings of the living room and dining room and wallpapered the ceilings between the beams. The fireplace was framed with black volcanic rock which was much in vogue at the time. Mrs. Bronson had the first refrigerator in town; it sat in the butler's pantry and was much admired.

The Bronsons raised two daughters, Jane and Louise. The parents remained in the house until the mid-1950's when David Bronson sold the printing company and the newspaper, and they left Las Cruces to join their daughter Jane in the Pacific Northwest.

There has been a succession of owners down through the years to the present, but the house has remained essentially the same. It has two bedrooms. The master bedroom has a sitting room with low built-in bookcases flanking an adobe fireplace. The kitchen and bath have been updated but the people who have lived in the home have been careful to preserve its integrity.

Louise Bronson, in a visit to her former home, declared: "It has always been a happy house." This sentiment has been echoed by those who have known the house and by those who have been privileged to live there.

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**THERESA GEREND** and her husband Tom moved to Hobbs, New Mexico, 20 years ago after a hard winter in northern Minnesota where the temperature had dipped to 50 degrees below zero. Later, when Dr. Gerend retired from his medical practice, they moved to Las Cruces. They had no thought of buying an old house, but simply wanted "something with charm." They fell in love with the historic Thompson home at curbside and have lived there since 1988.

# The Deeds of Roy Nakayama

*Chile and Pecans; Research  
and Teaching*

by Nancy Tod

**W**e know him best as “Mr. Chile,” posed smiling proudly next to his red and green offspring. Chile and Roy Nakayama became inseparable as the delights of capsaicins spread to such distant places as Bristol, New Hampshire, Canton, Ohio, and Glasgow, Washington. If he had done no more than propagate and promote our pungent peppers which contribute (according to Dr. John Mexal of New Mexico State University) more than \$10 million annually to New Mexico’s economy, he would have earned a place in New Mexico’s history; but Roy Nakayama did more. The same curiosity, persistence, spirit of innovation and attention to detail that developed *Big Jim*, *Espanola Improved*, and *R Naky* were present in



*Roy Nakayama, shown here in his outdoor chile laboratory in about 1975, developed a variety of milder chile much suited to popular tastes. Photo courtesy of Rio Grande Historical Collections, New Mexico State University.*

everything that Roy Nakayama did.

He always kept “trying to improve” his chiles and pecans, and his fishing and golf. John Owens, Dean of the NMSU College of Agriculture, said of Roy: “Professor Nakayama was intelligent, supportive, and courageous, and these are more than words; they are the virtues that Roy lived each and every day.” As people shared their stories about him, those virtues were often mentioned. They told of a man who was “always smiling,” and a professor with a “very dry sense of humor.” At a time when “spending your life at the office” was essential for “success,” there was a “scientist and artist” who took time to laugh and time to play. It was cause to wonder about the roots and the connections between creativity, commitment and playfulness.

Roy Nakayama never intended to be a researcher; he planned to be a farmer like his father, John, who had started the first successful commercial truck farm in the Mesilla Valley. Despite its physical hardships, farming was rewarding for John Nakayama and his sons. There was

always something different to do, a new challenge to face, a new problem to solve. They would experiment with various crops and cultural practices to see what worked best.

While the farm yielded little extra cash, it fed the family well and provided enough to purchase a car to transport the children to school. The farm gave John the means to fulfill his dream that all nine children go to college. There was even enough for small luxuries like the “store-bought” corduroy pants from Wertheim’s Dry Goods that Roy always wore to school.

Some sources maintain that the Nakayama boys “were up and out in the fields at four a.m., and their dad never slept,” but Carl Nakayama, the oldest son and the family storyteller, differs. He concedes that his dad never walked, “he always trotted everywhere,” but John Nakayama did sleep and the children had time off from work. There was time to slide down hayricks, time to swim in ditches, and time for scouting and 4-H camp in the summer. There was time for boys to “liberate” a horse from field work and grab a gun from the rack to go shoot rabbits on endless mesas that were quiet except for the rush of the wind and the lofty cries of the hawks. There was especially time to hear stories of exotic, far-off Japan.

Born Kaichiro Nakayama in 1879, Roy’s father came from a farm in Toyama Prefecture. Too many brothers had to share too little land so he would seek his fortune elsewhere. Before he left Japan in 1908, he examined the family’s rice harvest record book. Years later, while discussing crop rotation with Carl, he expressed surprise that crop rotation was employed in the Mississippi Delta. The Japanese grew rice on the same ground year after year. He knew that from the record book. In Toyama, the Nakayamas had harvested rice every year for 1,200 years. That quite obviously points to a genetic predisposition for farming!

Kaichiro arrived in Seattle with a friend from his home town, some savings from soldiering in the Russo-Japanese War, and a working knowledge of English. There he took the name John. After exploring much of the West, John went into a partnership with a German immigrant, W. W. Peters, near Mitchell, Nebraska. He learned to work cattle, break horses, and farm the high plains.

After establishing himself, John Nakayama sought Tome Miaguchi, the younger sister of his former traveling companion, for his wife. His twenty-one-year-old bride arrived in 1915. She was a doctor's daughter, a lady of privilege and status. Carl, born in Nebraska in 1916, recalled that his mother had never even made a bed before she married. What adventurous spirit led her to trade such security for the hardships of homesteading are yet to be discovered. Mrs. Peters taught her bed-making, bread-baking, and the myriad other skills a farm wife needed.

While riding fence one windy day, John's horse shied and threw him into a fence post, cracking several ribs. Unable to tolerate Nebraska's cold after that, John took his wife, pregnant with her second child, and his son, by train to examine some of W. W. Peters' land in Southwest Texas. As they approached El Paso, Tome became ill. Her recovery took a long time and the family needed income. Learning that several Japanese families had settled in the Las Cruces area, John found good land, which had belonged to the Shalam community from 1894 to 1907, to rent in Doña Ana. Unique among the utopian communities of its day, Shalam had a mission to "care for foundlings and orphans." Despite, or because of, its lofty ambitions, Shalam was never successful, losing the entire estates of its founders, John Newbrough and Andrew Howland. On September 11, 1923, Roy was born in what had been the Children's House. By 1925, Roy's enterprising father had saved enough to buy his own land although full, legal ownership came only a dozen years later. New Mexico's 1918 alien land law and the infamous Oriental Exclusion Act forbade "persons ineligible for citizenship" (by law all foreign-born Orientals were ineligible) from owning land or businesses. Like many Issei (first-generation Japanese who could not, by law until 1952, become U.S. citizens), John bought his farm in the name of his first American-born child. He chose Pat Campbell, then an employee of the old Mesilla Valley Bank, to be trustee. Eventually, the 25 acres grew to 105, with a few hundred more acres leased. When Carl turned 21 in March of 1937, the land was unconditionally owned by the family.

Roy entered Las Cruces Union High School in the fall

of 1937, the fifth Nakayama to do so. While the names of his siblings frequently appeared on the honor roll, Roy's surprisingly did not until the last quarter of his senior year. Classmates considered all the Nakayamas "very bright and good at everything," and one long-time Las Cruces adds laughingly that the Nakayamas "were so likeable you didn't even resent it." In high school, Roy had at least one real passion: tennis. Pat Barncastle vividly remembers him at lunch time, "biting a sandwich and hitting a tennis ball." Russell Ludwig and Dan Sosa Jr. often played tennis with Roy. Most of his classmates described him as shy, but Dan remembers him as "always smiling" and having something to say. Dan and Roy both took public speaking taught by Miss Louise Morehead. "She was an alert, compassionate and articulate teacher" who personally chose the students for her special senior year class. Roy would later use her attitude and methods as he impressed upon horticulture students the importance of clarity of expression.

Cecil Hellbusch taught vocational agriculture and led Future Farmers of America, Roy's best pursuits. There was more "hands-on" work than lecture time. Like Roy, Cecil liked field work best and spent time with all the boys on their farms. Although students usually wanted to be "cow-boys," preferring the romance of cattle to other livestock, Cecil showed them that the profitable enterprise at that time was sheep, particularly the hardy *Ramboulet*. Roy raised market lambs for several years. New Mexico's high schools took the livestock business seriously before World War II. In 1939, Las Cruces won the state championship. Although the yearbook fails to mention his name, Roy was on that winning team and the picture shows him beaming behind the trophy he holds.

The Class of 1941 earned unprecedented honors. In football, Las Cruces beat Albuquerque High for the first time, scoring 7-6 with the extra point in the first quarter. In basketball, they were state champions after defeating St. Michael's of Santa Fe by one point in a down-to-the-buzzer barnburner. Roy also had his personal triumphs: On senior "Sneak Day," he won the sack-racing contest. Taking "furiously-fast, short steps," he defeated the larger athletes who lurched and lumbered behind him.

Roy completed two years at New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts while his country went to war with the land of his grandparents. During a fireside chat on October 11, 1942, President Roosevelt asked for a draft of all 18 and 19- year old males. Roy presented himself to the campus recruiter on Monday and became one of many young men who enlisted and took the oath at that particular time. Called to active duty in May of 1943, he spent another year in college, at Sam Houston in Huntsville, Texas, waiting for assignments orders. His Company D of the 159th Infantry left for the European Theater on September 28, 1944.

Shortly after his arrival at the front, during the Battle of the Bulge, Roy and three buddies were captured by the Germans. "It was so cold that we couldn't throw the grenades very far," Roy later told a colleague at NMSU. They exploded harmlessly in the deep snow, showing the Germans where the GI's were. For seven months, Roy's days were spent cold, hungry, and "marching; always marching." When he was finally liberated from a small town east of Wiesbaden, Germany, Roy weighed 87 pounds, had ulcers and, one source reports, amoebic dysentery. According to his wife, Rose, and many friends and students, he never got warm again. On hot days, when everyone else wore sleeveless shirts and shorts, Roy would still be wearing a sweater. Neither could he any longer meet the physical demands and endure the rigors of the farming he loved. He had to find other work.

Roy, the decorated veteran, decided to return to college. Unfortunately, fifty years of anti-oriental "yellow journalism" and memories of the Pacific War and the Bataan Death March had affected the good sense of some college bureaucrats. Roy was refused admission "because he was Japanese." His service record and suffering made no difference. Fortunately, justice prevailed when professors from Roy's freshman and sophomore years insisted on his admission. He graduated in 1948. Between jobs at New Mexico A & M and with California's Department of Agriculture, Roy earned his Master's and Ph.D. from Iowa State. He became an associate professor at NMSU's College of Agriculture in 1960.

Loyalty in the face of prejudice, intellectual vigor to replace lost physical stamina, endless curiosity spiced with humor: these are the essential qualities Roy Nakayama brought to the disciplines of plant pathology and plant breeding and to New Mexico State University. He loved research best, contributing significantly to pecan development as well as to that of chile. His early maturing *Sullivan* and recently released *Salopek* will continue to help New Mexico pecan growers for years. If Georgia had not already claimed what little romance there is in nuts, perhaps pecans would be as hot in New Mexico as chiles. It may be, however, as a teacher that Roy Nakayama contributed the most to the science of horticulture in the Southwest.

College of Agriculture graduates frequently declare that “Roy Nakayama was the best teacher I ever had.” His resume tells more about his dedication to teaching than it does about his meticulous and exacting research. He took students out in the field and let them test and use what they learned in the classroom. With extraordinary patience, he showed them how to observe the world with all their senses.

One student recalled working for Roy collecting valuable experimental chile crosses for seed. When he dropped a pod from one of the crosses, Roy told him *not* to pick it up. “Look up,” Roy said, “Now look down. Which one is it?” The student, confused by the number of pods on the ground, could not tell. “You see,” Roy explained, “I’d rather lose the cross and have to do it over, than have you guess and put the wrong one in the bag.” He was demanding and thorough. “If Roy *suggested* you do something, you learned pretty quickly that you *better* do it,” a horticulture major remarked. While investigating greenhouse chile plants, an eager undergraduate declared that the yellowing of the leaves was iron chlorosis. Roy suggested he investigate further. The student looked at all sides of the plant and held to his diagnosis. “Flip the leaf over,” Roy said. The underside of the leaf was covered with aphids. “The moral of the story,” smiled Roy, “is don’t go out and give a quick judgment. Explore the plant all over ...look everything over before you give your opinion.”

As advisor to the students’ club, the Horticulture Forum, Roy helped soften a rift between the group’s factions.

In the spring of 1978, twelve students, fellow advisor Don Campbell, and Roy took a tour of several California farms and greenhouses. On the way home, they were driving through Las Vegas, Nevada. It was nighttime there, with bright neon lights everywhere. Dazzled and captivated by the outrageous extravagance they had only seen in pictures, the students begged to stay and look around, even though they had spent the last of their travel money. Roy *suggested* they go on. The students pleaded, "Please, just an hour." Roy relented, and a grin spread across his face. "You can't do research on lemons, cherries and plums without any funds," he said as he handed each student a ten-dollar bill.

Roy Nakayama retired from NMSU in 1986. He died on July 7, 1988. A horticulturist who "took every one of Roy's classes" said it best. "He taught us how to work; he made us think; and then he let us play." Another declared: "Roy Nakayama was the best researcher I've ever known ... the best horticulturist State ever had ... he was my hero."

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**NANCY TOD** *is a master gardener who operated a residential gardening business in Albuquerque for 17 years. As a high school student in Connecticut, she participated in a pilot program on Japanese culture. An interest in chile growing subsequently led her to Nakayama. She is now pursuing her interests in American Studies in Albuquerque where she lives in the historic Walter C. Raabe House.*

# The Archers of the Lower Rio Grande

*Reflexions of a Southern New  
Mexico Farmer*  
by **Walter P. Archer**

**T**he Archers came from a small farming community near Gadsden, Alabama, on the Cosa River, to a small farming community in the Mesilla Valley on the Rio Grande in 1920. For more than 70 years, the Archer family has contributed to the agricultural economy of southern New Mexico.

Andora Fuhrman and Frank Archer were raised in north-east-ern Alabama. After they married, they farmed, had a small country store, and ran a grist mill. Between 1906 and 1920, they had nine surviving children, of whom I was the fourth, born in 1911. In order of birth, the children, all of whom are still alive at this time, were: Ruth, Ben, Harriet, Walter, Margery, Louie, Helen, Frank, and Julius (Jukes or J.P.).

In 1920, after Mother was diagnosed with tuberculosis, the family took the long train ride from hot, humid Alabama to hot, dry Arizona. For six months, from June until December, Dad's friend Sam Lister, in Phoenix, tendered us the hospitality of a tent house under a cottonwood tree on the bank of an irrigation ditch near a field of long-staple cotton. The cotton was taller than our heads and, when we were not in school, we picked cotton for Mr. Lister, but were never paid, as he waited too long to sell and the bottom dropped out of the cotton market.

Dad couldn't find a "suitable farm," whatever that may have been, near Phoenix. When he learned of the Elephant Butte Dam project to tame the Rio Grande, he made a 400-mile scouting trip to the Mesilla Valley with a holiness preacher and two other fellows—arguing religion during the day and camping out at night. Near the village of San Miguel, he found a "suitable" farm and rented it from Charles Brown, who was anxious to move to California. Mr. Brown's son Charlie had a small dairy across the canal, and he was later to marry my sister Ruth and become my brother-in-law.

When Dad returned to Phoenix, he paid about \$500 for a two-seater Model T Ford touring car (I don't remember if it even had a top) to transport his sick wife, nine boisterous children, and himself on the four-day trip to New Mexico just before Christmas 1920. Along one of the rutted, chuck-holed, dirt roads, we lost a bag of dirty clothes, as well as a lot of oil, and a little time, when Dad neglected to close one of the three petcocks on the oil pan after checking the oil. Losing the clothes was not a problem, but losing the oil was, since a bearing burned out. We camped outside Willcox, Arizona, while a mechanic fixed the car. Stretching toward the Mesilla Valley, the road from Deming crossed the Mesilla Dam at the north end of what is now Stahmann Farms, which belonged to a group in Las Cruces, the Elephant Butte Land and Trust, and was practically all in *bosque* (brush and trees).

In Alabama, Dad had farmed cotton, which frequently was attacked by the boll weevil, and corn, which was planted with some type of itchy, fuzzy, black bean. In San Miguel, he farmed cotton, wheat, and

alfalfa. In this new land, we learned about irrigating fields that were not level, making check dams, cleaning grass and weeds out of dirt irrigation ditches, dealing with the strange New Mexico grass burrs, and creating and closing earth turnouts in the irrigation ditchbanks.

Cotton was a new crop in the Mesilla Valley, having been grown for only two or three years. Mr. Pettit had a cotton gin in Anthony, on the New Mexico-Texas line; and Anderson Clayton had one in Las Cruces. In 1921, Dad would take a wagon load of cotton to Las Cruces in the evening and sleep in it at the gin so he could get it ginned early the next morning. From our place, the fifteen-mile gravel road to Las Cruces went by way of Mesquite and took about four hours.

We attended San Miguel School, where there were about eight Anglo kids and 200 Hispanic children. We Anglos were outnum-bered and not liked. The principal, Mr. Semple, once spanked my brother Ben and me for “defending ourselves” during a noon recess school-ground fight.

The next year (1922), Dad rented two other farms — a 100-acre tract from Mr. Votaw and a 30-acre place in San Miguel, where we moved into an adobe house with dirt floors and no plumbing. Near the road (now Highway 28) was a pitcher water pump which soldiers had used to fill their canteens when they marched to Columbus after Pancho Villa’s March 9, 1916, raid on that New Mexico town. We never found any relics belonging to those soldiers; however, on Sunday mornings, we often found other objects of interest in the ditch along that road: a small sports car belonging to the town of La Mesa’s Justice of the Peace, as well as men sleeping off the effects of bootleg liquor. Prohibition encouraged grape-growers to make wine and a distilled liquor called *aguardiente*, and non-grape growers to make corn whis-key and other home brew. It improved commerce with Mexico, as people brought spirits from Juarez. One neighbor would drink lemon extract when he couldn’t get anything else; and another man once went berserk from bad booze and ran down Main Street stark naked.

That year, most of the banks went under, but most of the stores gave credit. We had an emotional and financial loss when one of our two horses was killed by lightning. We also

had a wonderful and joyful gain when Mother produced her eleventh child, James Marion Archer. Regrettably, James contracted tuberculosis, probably from Mother. After only two years, he followed an unnamed stillborn child from the earlier days of the marriage.

We moved to La Mesa in 1923, to another rented farm with a better house, but Mother's health continued to fail and she was moved to a TB sanitarium (now Southwestern Hospital) on Cotton Avenue in El Paso. She lived until Sunday, October 14, 1923, when someone interrupted us in church and hustled us off to see her alive one last time. At the age of 38, she was buried in the Masonic Cemetery in Las Cruces, where her headstone identifies her as Annie D., rather than Andora. After she died, various relatives helped care for us and we had a series of housekeepers. One, from somewhere near Fabens, Texas, seemed quite old, which she verified by telling us children that she was born on December 24, therefore being one day older than Christ. Another one, Miss Alice from Alabama, thought castor oil was the cure for whatever ailed one. She later moved in with a man named John Dalton (who we thought might be one of the Dalton Gang), who owned a small grocery store in La Mesa and loved to play a dice game called horses. He always carried a big roll of bills and, much later, he gave cousin Frank Lister and me a ride as far as Sierra Blanca when we took off on our one hobo adventure.

Across the street from Dalton's, we also had a grocery store. We came out of that slightly better than the one in Alabama, where, in the urgent rush to move west, Dad had sold the assets for promissory notes from which depression-era conditions made it impossible to collect even so much as ten cents on the dollar. Dad's sister Myra and her husband Uncle James "Bud" Lister and family came out from Alabama and went into business with Dad in the La Mesa store. That store burned one Sunday along with all the records of outstanding debts owed by people who had bought groceries on credit. Even without records, Dad sued one man and collected. A few years later, the Listers returned to Alabama; but one of their sons came back to run the La Mesa gin until he died at a very early age. Uncle Walter Archer's daughter Faye and

her husband, Jim B. Little, came out to take care of us and leased the rebuilt store until it burned again. Jim moved to Houston and became a used car dealer with Faye's brother, Jim Archer. The store was rebuilt once again and is still standing. Later, we had another store in Hatch, which eventually went to my oldest brother, Ben Archer. Grandmother Archer came out to La Mesa for several months and passed away about a year after returning to Alabama.

On February 8, 1924, Dad bought 85.7 acres northeast of La Mesa, part of the Baca Land Grant, from a Mr. Martinez for \$12,118.50 and Dad paid off the note prior to the 1929 crash. Part of the acreage was *bosque* and part was cultivated. River sediment deposited before the dam's construction had kept the land's nutrient level high, and one field had been in alfalfa for 25 years.

On February 22, 1924, Dad bought an adjoining 40 acres northeast of La Mesa from Sam Bellman for \$6,000. Uncle Phil Archer, who was to stay at times in the valley and at times in New Orleans or back in Gadsden, bought 60 acres across the ditch. We also worked 129 adjoining acres belonging to Al Fields, so we were tending about 300 acres.

Uncle Jake and Aunt Nora Fuhrman came out for a few years. Uncle Jake was Mother's brother and Aunt Nora was Dad's sister, so their offspring were our double first cousins. Uncle Jake worked with Dad and contracted to buy the Fields' farm when it was still *bosque*. He was the strongest man I ever knew, but not a good manager, so eventually he lost the farm and returned to Alabama.

In 1926, as a freshman, I went to the new Las Cruces High School with my brother Ben and sister Harriet. Still living in La Mesa, I transferred to Alta Vista (now Gadsden) High School for the second half of my sophomore year. Then Dad got sick and I dropped out of school for a semester. He had been cleaning a ditch in the cold, rainy, early spring when he got pneumonia, was misdiagnosed as having tuberculosis, and later underwent an operation for an abscess on a lung. At age 45, he was through with the heavy exertion of actual farming, but not with farms. Eventually he became an Agriculture Stabilization Conservation (ASC) inspector for the county and also was on the School Board for southern Doña Ana County. We rented a house

on Miranda Street in Las Cruces and Aunt Nora Fuhrman took care of the housekeeping. Her daughter Luverne was at Las Cruces High School with us, where Ben was in a school play, and we both went out for football. My senior year, the varsity squad consisted of Ed Mechem (who later became governor of New Mexico), Bammy Gilmer, Bill Johnson, Dupe Phillips, Don Hanna, Dutch Resley, Bunk Selby, Vince Lee (Oliver Lee's son), Van Scoggins, Frank Logan, Chuchie Medina, and me. After the crash of 1929, we moved to the La Mesa farm and built a four-room adobe house, which was expanded over the next several years. Dad lived there until his death, October 18, 1947. The house went to one of my younger brothers, Louie, and his wife Dorothy, and they replaced it with a much more modern home.

During the early part of the Depression, we had plenty to eat, but no money. In 1930-31, we figured we made six dollars profit. We didn't buy a single piece of equipment for three years. I was graduated from high school in January 1930, and, after another year or so in the fields, I decided there must be something better than farming, so I enrolled in the Coyne Radio School in Chicago. In 1931, with my \$300 savings in my pocket, I started a hitch-hiking and freight-hopping trip to the Windy City with two cousins, Frank Lister and Tom Griffin. Uncle Phil Archer was helpful in New Orleans and Gadsden, on the way to Chicago, and later sent me money to finish the school and get back to New Mexico. Radio school was pretty much a waste of money, but the experience was worth the cost.

After a few more years in the fields, I was determined to go to college in 1935, when Dad and W. H. Gary, who managed the La Mesa Gin, asked me to manage a 1,360-acre farm they wanted to buy near Rincon, New Mexico. It was one of Fay Sperry's farms. About half of it was in a crude state of cultivation and the rest *bosque*. The contract was for \$211,000 (\$5,000 down, \$4,600 annually, and some final balloon payments), plus an agreement that we would put 100 acres of *bosque* in cultivation each year. Sperry took a note for the down payment and, since an earlier south Texas bankruptcy had destroyed Gary's credit, Dad got a loan from George Matkin of the State National Bank in El

Paso, to cover operating expenses. Mr. Gary brought an old general purpose John Deere tractor to the partnership. It had two pistons and was cranked by turning the flywheel, which was on the outside of the tractor on the left side. We had such a hard time with it that I gave it back to him. We used Farmalls exclusively until Ben got the John Deere Agency. Mr. Gary did a good thing for the farm by selling our cotton on the futures market for about 12 cents a pound the second year we were there. That fall, cotton fell to five cents a pound. Not having the guaranteed price would have made paying our notes just about impossible. My brother Ben and his wife Dorothy went up to do the farm's bookkeeping, but he also worked in the County Treasurer's Office. He moved back to Las Cruces in the fall, when he was elected County Treasurer. He served in that office from 1936 until 1940.

Our foreman was a tall, skinny guy named Roy Langendorf who wore baggy pants and had had part of an ear bitten off in a fight after a two-day poker game in Hatch. He was a good foreman and worth his \$12 a week top wages. He got his feelings hurt pretty easily and would go for days without saying a word. I wasn't sorry when he and his lovely wife Rose bought a farm near Arrey, New Mexico. Rose's father, Mr. Kossey, was the blacksmith who did all our metal cutting and welding until the development of various simpler welding processes: acetylene-oxygen fusion welding torches, alternating current (AC) arc welders, then the more portable gasoline engine-powered direct current (DC) welders.

The workers, some of whom drifted in from the dust bowls of Oklahoma and Arkansas, got a dollar a day and were housed in several *jacals* (dirt-floored pole houses plastered with mud and straw) scattered around in the *bosque*. Strong backs cleared land with only shovels, axes, saws, and grubbing hoes, until we finally got a stump-puller to make the work easier. As manager of the Gary and Archer Farm, I received \$100 a month, plus money to pay income tax. I lived in the one adobe house on the farm, where I brought my bride, Virginia, after our May 1936 marriage in the First Baptist Church in Las Cruces.

We had two stillborn boys, both delivered by Dr. Stevenson in El Paso. The first, Walter P. Archer, Jr.,

was buried in the Masonic Cemetery in Las Cruces in 1938; the second, unnamed Baby Archer, was buried in El Paso's Evergreen Cemetery in 1946. Thankfully, we also had two strapping sons: Tommy, delivered by Dr. Vetter in Hatch in 1940, and Tim, delivered by Dr. Varnier in El Paso in 1948. After various adventures, both boys were graduated from the University of Arizona. Tom earned a B.S. in agriculture and an M.A. in agricultural economics; Tim earned a degree in systems engineering. Tom and his wife Carol, and Tim with his wife Trudy and their son Drew, all make their home in Tucson.

Before 1938, we had replaced the *jacals* with five three-room adobe houses, which cost about \$300 each. Virginia and I moved from the old adobe into one of the new little houses until we were able to build a nicer home for ourselves several years later. About 1938, we spent \$1,100 on material for two hay barns. Everything we needed was delivered on a bobtailed truck from a company in Bernalillo, north of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Those wooden barns are still in use. In 1940, Mr. Gary would come to Rincon and tell me what a good job I was doing; then he would go back to La Mesa and tell his buddies what a lousy job I was doing. Dad got wind of it and tried to buy Gary out, but he wouldn't sell, so the Gary & Archer Farm was split about 40-60, with Gary getting 560 acres and Dad getting 800 acres. The Archer portion became the Archer Brothers Farms, which also included the 160 acres in La Mesa, and the store in Hatch. My younger brother Frank and his wife Marjorie lived in La Mesa and ran the home farms through 1943. Frank took over the Rincon farm in 1944, when I rented a 200-acre farm in Anthony from Mr. McKamy. I kept the McKamy place a year. It was tough to work, as it had been cultivated only with horse-drawn equipment. It had some very good land and a lot of buckshot clay soil. Once a skunk had a family under the house and forced us to move into Anthony. There, for a few months, I worked for R.T. Hoover & Co. buying cotton.

In 1945, Frank joined the Navy. When he left in early summer, we moved back to the Rincon farm. The war years were rough. We had plenty of fuel, but tires were almost impossible to get. We used German and Italian prisoners

of war to pick cotton. They came from a camp next to the Hatch High School and from a camp near today's Las Cruces Walmart store. They weren't of much use; most of them picked less than 100 pounds per day.

After Dad died in 1947, the Archer Brothers Farms business was dissolved. Louie got the La Mesa farm. Ben got the store in Hatch and about 80 acres of the Rincon farm. Jukes, Frank, and I continued to farm the remaining 720 Rincon acres under the name San Diego Farms. In 1950, we dissolved San Diego Farms. Each of us received 240 acres. Jukes got the south end of the farm. He also bought some of Frank's middle section, and he purchased the adjacent Johnson place, so that he had approximately 360 acres of farm land. My third was on the north end of the Rincon place. I purchased 60 acres to the southwest from Mr. Joe Lucero, so that I had 300 acres. Virginia and I spent all our cash on a new house on the farm but in 1951, a terrible wind blew out our entire crop. After a bad beginning, the 1950's were, however, our best years.

I was on the Hatch School Board and the Doña Ana County School Budget Committee. I also served as President of the New Mexico Crop Improvement Association, and as Board Chairman of the Hatch Co-operative Gin. In 1957, I invested in and became a board member of the Mesilla Valley Bank, which became the Farmers and Merchants Bank. I sold my shares for a profit, but could have done much better had I stayed until the bank was later sold to an eastern New Mexico group which renamed it Western Bank.

In 1960, Virginia and I moved to Las Cruces. In a Democratic landslide, I was elected a Doña Ana county commissioner, and Jack Kennedy was elected president of the United States. The county commissioners were attending a meeting in Santa Fe when Jack Kennedy was assassinated. Commission work was time-consuming and I was glad when my term expired in 1965.

Our son Tom and his wife Carol returned to Hatch for about a year, but had a sad experience with a partner named Davis. They returned to Tucson in 1971. That same year, we sold the Rincon farm and I pretty much got out of the farming business.

Walter Lewis and I bought a 62-acre farm northwest of Las Cruces on what is now Southwind Road from Mrs. Selma McIntosh. We sectioned the property in pieces of various sizes and made a profit on the sale. We also took an appraisal course from Gene Mathers at New Mexico State University, and did farm and ranch appraisals. I got a real estate broker's license and had my own office for a while; but I found that selling real estate was almost as intensive as farming, so I got out of that.

The four Archer sisters all married and raised families. Two of them, Helen Archer Jones and Margery Archer Butler, taught school. Another, Harriet Archer Thomason Gerber, worked in school administration. Only the eldest, Ruth Archer Brown, married a farmer: our first Mesilla Valley neighbor, Charlie Brown, the dairy farmer. Louie, formerly a member of the Elephant Butte Irrigation District Board of Directors, is still an active fanner in the Mesilla Valley. He raises *el darica*, or Afghan pines in La Mesa. Frank, who introduced Bermuda grass to this area, sold his share of the farm property in Rincon and now lives in El Centro, California. Now (1993), only two of the five Archer brothers are in the Hatch Valley. Ben sold the store in Hatch and his share of the Rincon land. He now has a small pecan farm in Hatch and a pecan-cleaning operation. Since his 1936-1940 stint as Doña Ana County treasurer, he has served as mayor of Hatch and as a member of numerous civic committees, including over 20 years on the Hospital Board in Las Cruces. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Ben F. Archer Clinic in Hatch. Jukes has served on the Hatch City Council and on various other boards and commissions. He is the only one of the Archer brothers still to have his share of the Rincon property, where he raises pecans. On Wednesday and Saturday mornings, his son John usually can be found at the Farmer's Market held twice weekly on the Las Cruces Downtown Mall.

# George Adlai Feather

## *Renaissance Man*

by Ilka Feather Minter and

**Robert R. White**

**G**eorge Adlai Feather came to the Mesilla Valley in 1922 to teach languages at New Mexico College of Agricultural Mechanical Arts. He later became well-known for his interest in horticulture. He possessed a remarkable range of knowledge and interests, and, throughout his life, he contributed his efforts and talents to a great number of organizations and projects relating to history, languages, horticulture, music, sports, theater and public service.

Adlai was born on October 22, 1892, in Perry, Iowa. His father, Leslie Lorenzo Feather, a feed lot owner, came from families that had been in America since the late 1600's. His mother, Mary Vlesta Beranek Feather, was of Czech heritage and had immigrated to the United States at the age of 12. She never became fluent in English, so



*George Adlai Feather, 1922.*

Adlai became bilingual, learning Czech from his mother and English from his father. His strong interest in languages more than likely stems from this experience.

He was named George for his maternal grandfather and received his middle name from Adlai E. Stevenson, who was running for Vice-President in 1892, was elected and served under Grover Cleveland from 1893 to 1897. Adlai had one older sister, Shirley, and two younger brothers, Landis Beranek and Lincoln Anthony.

“Adlai was always large and strong for his age,” Shirley recalled in later years, so when he began school he was instructed in proper behavior. She went on to explain what this led to:

A few weeks later my father was passing the school yard and saw Adlai being pounded by a smaller boy and making no effort to defend himself, with other boys standing aroundcheering and jeering. That evening, he asked for an explanation. "Well," Adlai answered, "you always tell me never to hit a boy smaller than I am, and they all are." Instructions were hastily revised by adding the words "unless he hits you first." The next day, a small but confident attacker received the surprise of his life. After a few more such incidents to prove that it was no accident, Adlai's school career from then on was peaceful and uneventful.

Adlai's mother suffered from inflammatory rheumatism and his father had a pulmonary problem, so their physician advised them to seek a warm, dry climate. As a consequence, in December 1906, the Feather family moved to Artesia, New Mexico. Adlai, who, at the age of 14, was 6' 2" tall, shepherded the household goods and livestock to New Mexico on the train by himself, while his sister, Shirley, escorted her ailing parents and the two younger boys, visiting relatives in Omaha on the way.

Adlai enrolled in high school in Artesia but was soon bored with the curriculum. The principal registered him in a Latin course and his teacher was able to stir his enthusiasm for this particular subject. He also began to learn Spanish; and he started playing the clarinet in the high school band.

Upon graduation from high school, Adlai enrolled in Park College at Parkville, Missouri. At the end of his second year, he got a job playing clarinet for a dance band in a Kansas City night club to earn some money to help his brothers. One evening, as he was leaving the club with his case and music in hand, he was seen by the dean of the college. The college was extremely strict regarding student conduct and, the very next day, "Mr. Feather" was asked to leave.

During the course of the next five years, Adlai attended

the University of New Mexico for a total of only five semesters, because he alternated with his siblings in the care of his mother in Artesia (she was by then a total invalid). He was graduated with a bachelor's degree in Greek and Latin in 1916. Extra-curricular activities included football, band, chorus, little theater, and Spanish Club. In his senior year, he was elected to Phi Kappa Phi, a national honor society.

Adlai returned to UNM the following year and, on May 8, 1917, received the first master's degree awarded there. He majored in Latin and his thesis was entitled: "Prepositional Phrases as Modifiers of Nouns."

Adlai was the recipient of a Rhodes Scholarship in 1917. Because of World War I, however, all such scholarships were postponed for the duration. He joined the Marine Corps and was assigned as interpreter for the 3rd Provincial Regiment at Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Because he had so many friends in Santo Domingo, he chose to be mustered out of the Marine Corps there, and, after a short vacation, he returned to New Mexico.

The Rhodes Scholars chosen in 1917 were finally scheduled to go to England in 1919. Adlai did not have enough money to travel to New York to embark with his classmates, so he joined a circus band and played with them until he got to New York. He probably crossed the Atlantic on the Cunard steamship *Saxonia* with the other Rhodes Scholars for that year. At Oxford, his choice was Wadham College, where his primary interest was Russian. His tutor also drilled him in German, Italian, French, Flemish, and various other European languages. He even participated in athletics, earning letters in rugby, hammer throw, and rowing.

Because of his fluency in German and Russian, he worked during the school breaks of 1920 with the Hoover Commission exchanging German and Russian prisoners. In Leipzig, his guide was none other than Joseph Goebbels, later Hitler's propaganda chief in Nazi Germany. Adlai spent the summer of 1921 at the University of Madrid and

played with the symphony orchestra in that city. He taught Spanish at Durham University during the summer of 1922.

While he was at Oxford, he met Ilka Italia Howells, an American, born and raised in Florence, Italy, who was attending Mary Magdalene College. She was studying for a medical degree but gave up her plans to accept Adlai's proposal of marriage. They returned to the United States and were married at the home of her aunt in New York City on June 28, 1923. They left immediately for New Mexico, where he had accepted a position as head (and only member) of the language department at New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts (now New Mexico State University).<sup>1</sup> In the letter in which Dr. H. L. Kent, president of the college, offered Adlai the position of professor of Spanish, a salary of \$2,250 for a nine-month period was mentioned. Dr. Kent's letter was most cordial and gracious; he even offered to find a house for the new faculty member and to arrange for the college to store his furniture and library. After the birth of their first child, the Feathers went back to Europe, where he studied an additional year and earned the equivalent of a doctor of philosophy degree in European Languages from Oxford.

In the early 1930's, Adlai was involved in a serious automobile accident in which his lip was cut, preventing him from speaking for a month. Though he was proficient in fourteen languages and his wife only fluent in five, she took over his classes. The students in his Latin classes had a month's vacation, but those taking Spanish, French, German, and Italian had a well-qualified substitute. Although he handled a full load of teaching, Adlai also referred to himself as a "gentleman farmer." He bought a four-room house in Mesilla Park to be near the college, and, in subsequent years, added on to both the house and the farm acreage. With the help of the Department of Agriculture, he began growing plants not native to the Mesilla Valley. Many of these such as the jujubee, the Montezuma cypress, the Italian pine, and the Atlas cedar, were found to be able

to subsist on very little water. He began a landscape nursery and, in addition, raised flowers (primarily gladioluses, sweetpeas and roses) for shipment to Dallas and Los Angeles. So, at the time he left the college in 1935, he had a flourishing horticultural business.

In the more than fifty years from the time of his arrival in the Southwest until his death, Adlai was involved in a remarkable number of associations and organizations. At the college, he headed the Lyceum program, played in a woodwind quartet, headed the library committee, and was assistant football coach for two years.

Because of his farming, he joined the Farm Bureau, serving as president of the H. H. Brook Local and as president and later as a member of the Board of Directors of the Doña Ana County Farm Bureau. In those capacities, he played a role in the Elephant Butte Irrigation District, the local reclamation plans, and the Cooperative Locker Plant.

One of his chief interests was helping handicapped and disadvantaged children, primarily through the Sisters of the Good Shepherd Home, the Easter Seal Society, and the Rotary Club. Having joined the Rotary Club of Las Cruces in 1938, he served as president for the 1940-41 term. He was honored with the Paul Harris Award in 1971.

Adlai Feather was a charter member, with A. W. Chilton, Hugh Milton, Rosemary Buchanan, and others, of the Coronado Players and worked with such leading ladies as Gloria Hayner and Fredrica and Abby Lewis. Father Owen de Silva of the Holy Cross Retreat House enlisted him in the cast of *Los Pastores*, where he played the part of the Prophet for ten years. Adlai was a member of the New Mexico Folklore Society and served as president in the early 1960's.

The Doña Ana County Museum Society was incorporated in December 1939 for the purpose of collecting memorabilia relating to the Mesilla Valley. In the late 1950's, Harry Bailey wanted to give the land on which Fort Selden stood to the state to be used as a monument. To facilitate

this transfer (under the existing tax laws), the Doña Ana County Museum Society became the Doña Ana County Historical Society. Louis Freudenthal, Betty Bowen, and G. A. Feather signed the articles of incorporation in 1961. Freudenthal served as the first president, and Feather was the second president. Adlai entered the society's Hall of Fame in 1971. When NMSU President Gerald Thomas and Dr. Monroe Billington, professor of history, founded the Rio Grande Historical Collections at NMSU in 1971, Adlai was asked to serve on the first Board of Directors. At that time, Adlai was also on the Board of Directors of the Historical Society of New Mexico and had served as the general chairman of the state convention, held in Las Cruces in 1963.

Adlai had a life-long interest in history in general, and more specifically in southwestern history. Intrigued by T. M. Pearce's *New Mexico Place Names*, Adlai decided to visit every place listed. When he arrived at a populated place, he would drive up and down the street looking for someone sitting on their front porch. He would stop, ask for a glass of water, and then engage the person in conversation, first about trivial matters, and then about the history of the place. He estimated that, in twelve years of research, he had visited all but about 70 of the approximately 2,000 places listed by Pearce. He maintained a lengthy correspondence with Pearce through the years.

Probably the most amazing thing about George Adlai Feather was the scope of his knowledge and interests. He had a large library, and he kept extensive files on a broad range of subjects. The program chairman of every organization to which he belonged knew that he could be relied on for a last-minute speech on almost any subject. Published authors and would-be authors frequently consulted him about their research. He always gave very willingly of his time and his knowledge.

George Adlai Feather died at his home in Mesilla Park on October 30, 1976, just after his 84th birthday. His

wife died on November 25, 1977. Adlai and Ilka had five children, one of whom died in infancy. Two of their children still live in New Mexico, Ilka in Mesilla Park and Frank in Albuquerque. Gertrude is in Colchester, England, and Mary lives in Roxbury, Connecticut.<sup>2</sup>

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**ILKA FEATHER MINTER** *has held various offices with the Doña Ana County Historical Society and, like her father, is a member of the Hall of Fame. She attended Loretto Academy in Las Cruces and college in Philadelphia. She is the author of articles on the village of Doña Ana, Las Cruces and Mesilla Park.*

**ROBERT R. WHITE** *earned a Ph.D. from the University of New Mexico and is the immediate past-president of the Historical Society of New Mexico. He served as a hydrologist for the U.S. Geological Survey in Las Cruces from 1974 to 1978 but now resides in Albuquerque. He is the author of books and articles about the art and history of New Mexico.*

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#### NOTES

- 1 The editor of this publication was privileged to serve as head of the same department more than half a century later from 1975 to 1983 where he taught French and Latin until his retirement in 1989. He also knew Adlai as a member of the Rotary Club of Las Cruces from 1973 on and remembers well the annual Rotary picnics which Adlai graciously hosted at his house.
- 2 Because of space limitations, it was impossible to make use of all of the information so generously given by John Augustine, Pat Duttie, William Erwin, Terry Gugliotta (UNM Archives), Priscilla and Mike Grijalva, Austin Hoover and Linda Blazer (Rio Grande Historical Collections), Charlotte Priestley, the Honorable Dan Sosa, Dr. Bruce Streett, State Representative J. Paul Taylor, Dr. Gerald Thomas, and Cal Traylor. The authors are, nevertheless, indebted to these individuals for their contributions to this article.

# Major General James H. Carleton

## *New Mexico's Controversial Civil War Commander*

by Allan Holmes

Major General James Henry Carleton commanded the Military Department of New Mexico from September 1862 to March 1867. Carleton had a tremendous impact on Doña Ana County. He brought with him the California column, many of whose members stayed and prospered in the area. He defended the territory from further Confederate attack, and he was responsible for the building of Fort Selden to protect the valley from Indian raids.

Upon his arrival in New Mexico, General Carleton was faced with problems such as the threat of invasion by the Confederacy, a lack of civil government in the areas previously occupied by the Confederates, and continuous raids by the Apaches (both Mescaleros and Mimbres) and the Navajos. Many historians do not judge his efforts to solve these problems as very adequate. Historian Dan



*Bvt. Brig. Gen. James H. Carleton strikes a fierce pose in this 1866 photograph. Photo courtesy Museum of New Mexico Neg. No. 22938*

Thrapp states that Carleton was a “bumbler” and his Indian program was a “fiasco.”<sup>1</sup> Robert Utley describes Carleton as a tyrant who needlessly suppressed civil liberties of the citizenry of southern New Mexico.<sup>2</sup> Arrell Gibson adds that “he was devoid of compassion.” The only voice that conveys a favorable impression of him is that of his biographer, Aurora Hunt. She writes that Carleton was a dedicated, single-minded professional soldier, but she does not address the specific actions that made Carleton unpopular in certain parts of New Mexico.<sup>3</sup>

James Henry Carleton was born on December 27, 1814, in Lubec, Maine. He was commissioned a lieutenant in the

Maine militia on August 20, 1838, during the Quebec revolt and the resulting Maine border controversy with Canada. In 1839, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the First Dragoons of the regular Army, and, after completing his training, he was stationed at Fort Gibson on the Red River. This assignment began Carleton's experiences at a series of western posts and during many western expeditions. He served at Fort Leavenworth from 1842 to 1844, joined Colonel Kearney's expedition from 1844 to 1845, and was assigned to Fort Union, New Mexico (1851-56), and Fort Tejon, California (1856-61). It was while he was at Fort Tejon in 1859 that he was ordered to Utah to investigate the infamous Mountain Meadows Massacre. He had also served with General Taylor at Buena Vista during the Mexican War (1845-48) and had been brevetted as a major for gallantry and meritorious service during that battle.<sup>4</sup> While the commander of Fort Union, he showed the strong sense of responsibility and duty for which he would later become noted. Whiskey sellers had their goods destroyed, and prostitutes were whipped and sent off the military reservation under Carleton's orders. Judge Joseph Knapp, U.S. District Judge in Mesilla, also came under criticism when a cowboy set fire to a drunken Indian and Judge Knapp did nothing to the cowboy. Carleton immediately complained to the governor and got Knapp removed from the Fort Union area. This incident started a long feud between him and Carleton.

Carleton resigned from the regular Army in 1861 to train and lead the California Volunteers in response to the occupation of New Mexico by the Confederate Army. During the march from California to the New Mexico Territory in 1862, he was promoted to Brigadier General of Volunteers. Carleton never actually fought the Confederates. With Colonel Henry Sibley's defeats in early 1862 at Pigeon's Ranch and Glorieta Pass, the Confederate invasion force and its territorial government had been forced to withdraw from the New Mexico Territory. Confederate Colonel John Baylor, who had captured Mesilla and been appointed Governor of the Territory, was also forced to retreat to San Antonio, Texas.

Upon his arrival in New Mexico in the fall of 1862,

Carleton assumed command of the Department of New Mexico from General E.R.S. Canby who had fallen from favor because of his somewhat lethargic pursuit of Sibley. Carleton's new command stretched from Fort Garland, Colorado, west to the California- Arizona boundary, south to Fort Quitman (south of El Paso), and east to the plains of West Texas. He controlled this vast area with approximately 2,000 volunteers and 1,000 regulars.

His missions were simple to state, but difficult to accomplish. He was to defend the territory from further aggression by the Confederacy, control the hostile Indian population, and reestablish Union control over the Confederate Territory of Arizona and its capital, La Mesilla. Carleton called Mesilla "a hot nest of traitors" and refused to establish his headquarters there. Instead, he set up his remount and supply station on what is now the downtown mall of Las Cruces, then moved north to his headquarters in Santa Fe.

After returning to San Antonio, Confederate Colonel Baylor had raised a new force of some 6,000 troops. The rumors began flying throughout the Department of New Mexico in late 1862 that Baylor would again invade the Territory of New Mexico. In November 1862, Carleton wrote his second in command, General Thomas West, whom he had stationed at Las Cruces, "Baylor has raised a force of 6,000 men and is awaiting transportation ... this information by way of Dr. Duffendor [Dieffendorf] of El Paso, Mexico ... seemed prudent to suspend movement of troops."<sup>5</sup> The War Department had ordered Carleton to send the Colorado Volunteers, who had fought at Glorieta, back north, but Carleton seized upon these rumors to keep them in New Mexico for another six months. Baylor's force received transportation, but not the horses and mules that Carleton expected. They received ships and were ordered to the coast for movement to the east. However, Carleton still persisted in preparing himself for an onslaught of Texans.

In December, he warned all forts to be on the alert: "word from El Paso [Mexico] that Skillman's force now occupies Fort Clarke, and he may be the advance of Baylor's force."<sup>6</sup> The Mexican's had warned Carleton of

the advance of Skillman's force toward El Paso. Reports on the size of this force varied from 50 to 500 men. Henry Skillman was an accomplished scout who had established the first overland mail route from San Antonio to El Paso. He was now in the employ of the Confederacy as a spy and courier. Historian Wayne Austerman states that "[Skillman] kept the Union forces in constant fear of invasion for a period of almost two years."<sup>7</sup>

The Confederate threat of Baylor and Skillman had a tremendous effect on the civilian population of the southern district. On 18 November 1862, Carleton issued this order to West:

You will at once secure all corn and grain ... in excess of family needs for two months ... from the people of San Elizario, Socorro, Isletta [Ysleta], Franklin, La Mesa, La Mesilla, Las Cruces, and Doña Ana. It will be carefully stored and guarded at La Mesilla. If people will not sell it to you—it must be seized and receipts issued. Under no circumstances will it be left for the enemy.<sup>8</sup>

The need to confiscate grain for reason of military necessity was obvious. It was suspected that there was a force of 6,000 Confederates to Carleton's 3,000 volunteers of which 1,000 were involved in campaigns against the Indians and were protecting communication routes to the territory. This gave Baylor a 3 to 1 advantage based on Carleton's intelligence information. He accordingly planned a retrograde operation with his first defense at Fort Craig. Despite all this, the affected individuals, displaying a natural aversion to giving up their food, immediately began to move themselves and their grain across the river into Mexico.

In November, 1862, Carleton also issued arms to the people and expected them to act as *guerilleros* during the expected invasion. In a message to West, he indicated his military strategy of "blackened earth," a technique which

would be used very effectively later in the war in Georgia by Sherman:

All good Union men among the Americans will rally around you. All doubtful Americans and foreigners will be seized and sent to Fort Craig [once Baylor begins movement up the river] ... There with a spade they can help defend the flag which has hither to protected them. All secessionist houses and stores will be laid to ashes. The last thing done before the arrival of the enemy ... you will destroy Bull's mill at La Mesilla and Grandjean's mill at Las Cruces. The Mexican population [probably referring to the Hispanic population of U.S., not Mexican Nationals] that desires to remain behind can grind their flour with metates.<sup>9</sup>

This seems harsh, but it was good common sense to deny the Confederates food for men and their mounts. The practice became almost standard by the military during the Civil War. It was an obvious effort to deny the Confederates the ability to live off the land.

The threat from Baylor never materialized, but West had already purchased the grain and corn. Darlis Miller writes, "As their fears subsided, residents returned to their homes [by December 1862],"<sup>10</sup> but grain was now scarce. The Army met the shortage by importing grain from Mexico. In March 1863, Carleton directed his supply officer in Las Cruces to insure that sufficient grain was on hand to support the area. West was also told to return the grain he had confiscated. This whole incident caused Carleton much grief. Several citizens complained later that they had been given less than the going price for the grain. For this and other reasons, Carleton removed West from command and brought charges against him.

There were other occasions when Carleton provided grain to the people of the Mesilla Valley. During the flood

of 1864-65, which changed the banks of the Rio Grande and destroyed the crops from Doña Ana south to San Elizario, he issued free seed, grain and other foodstuffs to the destitute people in the Mesilla Valley. A message to John Lemon of Mesilla in June 1865 states that “Colonel Davis is here in Las Cruces and will be in charge of helping the poor and the destitute.”<sup>11</sup> His report to Washington was evidence of the plight of the farmers of the valley.

Floods from 10 May to 10 June. Crops destroyed. Farmland ruined. Towns flooded.... followed by myriads of grasshoppers and then hail storms. I have issued beans and corn to plant, but that relief is not enough. Send one million pounds of corn, one million pounds of flour. We will buy mesquite beans for forage and leave corn and other grains for the people. <sup>12</sup>

This probably looked good on paper, but the troopers could not get their mounts and mules to eat the mesquite beans.

During his tour of duty, Carleton implemented some rather radical control measures, but he always kept his War Department superiors informed and seemed to have their tacit approval. He used citizens to work on the defenses at Fort Craig; he issued passports or travel permits to and from the southern District of Arizona; he seized property belonging to known secessionists; and he made all citizens swear an oath of allegiance to the United States. All of these acts were approved and supported by Washington. Yet., his policies irritated a certain segment of the population and ultimately resulted in Carleton being relieved of his command.

Carleton felt that passports or travel documents were necessary due to the alarming number of secessionists and spies. The passport system was only used for travel to and from the southern part of the territory. Everyone had to get travel permission from the Provost Office to travel between Santa Fe and the recaptured territory. Provost offices were established in Franklin, Mesilla, Las Cruces, Socorro, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe, close to each stagecoach stop

where the officers and enlisted men could check travel documents easily.

Judge Joseph Knapp refused to get a passport and was arrested when he attempted to travel to Santa Fe. His arrest prevented the New Mexico Supreme Court from sitting in 1863 because his absence denied the court a quorum. This incident was another among many in the long-running feud between Knapp and Carleton. Judge Knapp was finally replaced, but his articles in the Santa Fe *New Mexican* contained vitriolic attacks on Carleton's policies. Knapp also wrote a letter to President Lincoln complaining about the passport policy. Carleton further believed that it was Knapp who was writing stories against him in the New York *Herald*.<sup>13</sup>

Knapp was not the only official required to use travel permits. Carleton also required the Secretary of State, William F. Army, and the deputy governor, to have travel documents "because you cannot expect my soldiers to recognize you."<sup>14</sup> He even required the Southern Overland Mail riders to have travel permits to carry the mail. During the rumors of Baylor's approach in December, 1862, Carleton sent this message to one of his provost offices: "There are men here ... some of them government officers such as judges, who may not want to stay and defend the country if invaded ... capture and send them back [to me]."<sup>15</sup> Carleton kept the passport law in effect until 4 July 1865.

Confiscation of property and jail for a secessionist was the most extreme form of population control. Many were confined in local jails and at the territorial prison in Yuma. For example, on September 22, 1862, Carleton wrote, "a board will be ordered to record testimony on Phillips loyalty ... if he is an enemy, his property will be taken."<sup>16</sup> In an answer to the Attorney General of the United States, Edwin Bates, Carleton stated, "I arrested Sylvester Mowery [Mowry] as an enemy of the United States ... he was sent to Yuma."<sup>17</sup>

One report on confiscation was unusual. It concerned the arrest of a very prominent citizen, Martin Amador. Captain Thayer arrested Amador at his house on June 20, 1865, and took him to the Provost Marshal Office in Las Cruces.

At the office, he was confronted by a person who claimed to be the slave of Amador. Thayer informed Amador and the servant that Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation and that the servant was free to go. The records do not show how this case turned out, but Evangelista Perez made a formal protest to Governor Henry Connelly on behalf of Amador about the non-fulfillment of contracts by indentured servants.<sup>18</sup>

In many cases, when the people signed an oath of allegiance, their property was restored, but, in one case, it was not. Frank DeRyther, a brother mason, sent a signed oath to Carleton, but Carleton refused it, and DeRyther complained to the governor. Carleton responded “my judgment may err as regards men but I know I have never intentionally been unjust, unkind, or uncharitable.”<sup>19</sup> Seven days later, however, he again responded that he would not accept the oath:

... you signed a call for the secessionist convention on 16 March 1861, you were a member of that convention, you voted for the preamble and signed ... the resolutions ... you may be a good mason but how are you a good Union man?<sup>20</sup>

The enforcement of civil law in this manner was not to Carleton’s liking. When the civil authorities began returning to the New Mexico Territory after the Confederate invasion, the attorney general of the Territory and the U.S. Marshal, Abraham Cutler, assumed the responsibility of confiscation. In a letter dated September 27, 1862, Carleton explained the policy to the U.S. District Attorney, Theodore Wheaton:

I have been credibly informed that many persons who reside within New Mexico and those now absent who own property in the territory are enemies to the government and have been engaged in treasonable acts against it. It is manifestly the imperative duty to all United States officials, civil and military, to see the laws faithfully executed ... to punish treason, seize and confiscate the property of rebels .... During the invasion, the judges were

absent and some property was confiscated under military orders ... if you wish the names of these persons who, by reason of notorious disloyalty were held to forfeit their property, I will furnish them to you.<sup>21</sup>

Carleton never attempted to hold on to his martial law authority either, but very willingly gave it back to the civil authorities as quickly as possible. He even asked Army for relief from what he considered an odious task in January 1863:

All that below the Jornada is still under military control. Litigants have to appeal to military courts ... a great deal of labor for the military that does not properly pertain to its jurisdiction ... I am very anxious that civil authorities relieve the military of this duty.<sup>22</sup>

Carleton was a little angry, however, about giving over power to law officials in Franklin, which was outside the New Mexico Territory. On July 3, 1863, Carleton, in a message to the governor, demanded to know “What civil authorities have taken control of El Paso County? ... No officer appointed by the Territory of New Mexico or Arizona has the authority.”

When Carleton received a petition from Doña Ana County citizenry to restore martial law in September 1863 because of shenanigans by Knapp and others, he sent it to Governor Connelly for advice. On October 19, 1863, Carleton, after conferring with Connelly, replied to Henry Jenkins of Las Cruces, “I do not have the right to suspend habeas corpus or declare martial law.”<sup>23</sup> Historian William Keleher writes that Carleton was in fact a dictator, especially “during his several years of despotic control over the affairs of New Mexico,” but it seems that Carleton tried to rid himself of that duty several times; there just was not anyone around to replace the system<sup>24</sup>.

The Army’s control of the local Indians during the Civil War was probably the most important task for the citizens

of Doña Ana County. Carleton planned to make efficient use of his minimal forces by subduing the Indian tribes one at a time. He outlined this plan in a letter to the Adjutant General, Brigadier Lorenzo Thomas, in February 1863. He wrote: "... it is not practical with my present force and amount of means to make effective demonstrations on more than one tribe at a time."<sup>25</sup> The Santa Fe *New Mexican* reported:

The most efficient means ever exerted to subjugate the Indian in this country are those now being carried on by General Carleton. No officer remains idle at the post or in places of no military influence. He is establishing new posts at the most important points and is sending troops into the heart of Indian country.<sup>26</sup>

In the first phase of his plan, his troops reoccupied Fort Stanton, built Fort Sumner, subdued the Mescaleros, and moved them to Bosque Redondo along the Pecos River.

In his second phase, Carleton sent forces from Las Cruces and Franklin to the Mimbres region to pacify the Gila or Mimbres Apaches. The plan included building a new fort, Fort West, at the headwaters of the Gila River. This part of the plan was not successful, for the skirmishes with the Apaches and the presence of the fort merely forced them west into Arizona and south into Mexico. In Carleton's view, however, the expedition was a great success. He reported to the War Department on February 1, 1863, "... the Mescaleros are completely subdued ... and expeditions into the Gila have been quite successful ... now propose to punish the Navaho."<sup>27</sup> One must question Carleton's optimism; his solution was like using one's fingers to plug leaks in a dike when there are more than ten holes.

As soon as Carleton drew forces from the southern forts to fight the Navajos, the Apaches renewed their raids on the settlements and ranches in the vacated areas. Ugly comments from the citizens began to appear in the local press. A reader from Las Cruces complained to the editor of the *New Mexican* that "Carleton was too busy with his

plan to deal with the Indian depredations, murders and robberies of the people."<sup>28</sup> This comment stung because he had already begun the construction of a series of forts along the Rio Grande.

One of those new posts was Fort Selden located about 18 miles north of Las Cruces. Fort Selden, like Craig, McRae, Thom, and Fillmore, was being established not as a fighting fort, but as a base camp from which the soldiers patrolled and provided escort service to the citizens of La Mesilla. A typical patrol report read:

1st day: left this post [Selden] with Lieutenant Carrigan and 25 enlisted...men of companies A and H 1st NM Cavalry ... scouted east to ... Augustine Springs. No sign of Indian.

2d day: moved north to San Nicholas Spring [east side of San Andres]. ... High winds. No sign of Indians.

3d day: rejoined Lt Carrigan at San Augustine Springs. Still no ... Indians.

4th day: followed the old wagon road to Rocky Springs. 5-7th days: scouted down east slope [Franklins] scouting toward Fort ...Bliss.

8th day: arrived at Fort Bliss.

9th day: rested horses and mules.

10th day: marched 6AM arrived at cottonwoods [probably near present ... day Anthony] at 3PM. Covered 25 miles.

11th day: weather cold ... rain and hail arrived Las Cruces 11PM.

12th day: departed Las Cruces 8AM arrived Fort Selden 2PM. No sign ... of Indians. Total distance covered 183 miles.<sup>29</sup>

A dull and boring report, but Carleton's aim was to keep soldiers in the field to reduce the number of raids in the Mesilla Valley.

General James Carleton, in attempting to restore the

Union flag over New Mexico, was faced with varied and complex problems which he handled in a simple, direct, and forceful manner. He prepared to defend against an enemy that outnumbered him three to one by denying that enemy access to necessary resources and by arming civilians. He also used civilian labor to rebuild the defenses of both Fort Craig and Fort Union and was supported in this endeavor by the Territorial government.

The major complaint against him was that he was despotic. Yet, he never attempted to hold on to martial law. In fact, he pleaded with the governor to relieve his men of the law enforcement task. Carleton, a democrat, was not as injudicious as General Ambrose Burnside who arrested and jailed someone with the political clout of Clement Vallandigham, but Carleton's troops did arrest Judge Knapp and others, thus making powerful enemies. Their clamor finally forced President Johnson to relieve Carleton in September 1866. Despite Carleton's dismissal by the War Department, General Phillip Sheridan, commanding the Army of the West, requested that he be allowed to remain at his post until January 1867. Carleton left Santa Fe in February 1867 as a lieutenant colonel and returned to his regiment in San Antonio, Texas. This author agrees wholeheartedly with Arrell Gibson's statement that Carleton was a good soldier, but a poor politician.<sup>30</sup> It should be added that he was compassionate, and dedicated. His tenure in New Mexico surely deserves more study.

The Santa Fe *New Mexican* reported in October 1866: "It thus appears that our territory will be relieved from the presence of this man Carleton who has so long lorded it amongst us."<sup>31</sup> It had certainly changed its tune since 1864. The Santa Fe *Gazette* remained faithful to Carleton, and, on 27 January 1867, published a single-column black-bordered obituary-style announcement of the Territorial Legislature's treatment of Carleton: "... in memory of the most ignorant, most odious [Territorial Legislature], with its infamous conduct ... a scandal to the territory ...."<sup>32</sup> It is apparent that the people of the time had mixed emotions about Carleton. He never personally answered his critics, but his friends wrote many a scathing letter to refute their allegations in

the pages of the *New Mexico Gazette*.

When he died of pneumonia in January 1873, a resolution appeared in the *New Mexican* to proclaim the “... zeal, honesty and ability [with] which he exercised his duties ....”<sup>33</sup> The problem with Carleton is that he was neither hero nor villain, but an officer simply performing his duty as he perceived it.

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# **Hugh M. Milton II**

## ***Educator Soldier - Distinguished American***

by Lee Gemoets

**H**ugh M. Milton II was born in 1897 in Kentucky. He graduated from the University of Kentucky where he later was named a distinguished graduate. As an educator, he was first an instructor at Texas A & M University, then an engineering professor, dean and president of New Mexico A & M College, now New Mexico State University. In 1941, as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, he was called to active duty. He served on the staff of General Douglas MacArthur and helped plan the invasion of the Philippines. During his World War II service, he eventually rose to the rank of brigadier general. He returned to his duties as president of New Mexico A & M College in 1946 but later accepted the position of superintendent at New Mexico Military Institute in Roswell. In 1950, he was recalled to active duty by President Truman as chief of the



*General Hugh Milton II in about 1955. Photo courtesy of the Rio Grande Historical Collections, New Mexico State University Library.*

army reserve with the rank of major general. Later, he was nominated by President Eisenhower as under secretary of the army, confirmed by the Senate, and, a short time later, was promoted to the number two post in the Army as assistant secretary, with the equivalent rank of four-star general.

General Milton's Army service yielded many military decorations including the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster. In 1961, he was honored as Minute Man of the Year by the Reserve Officers Association. Among others who received this award were Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge and President Harry Truman. Over the years, many other awards and honors were conferred on General Milton, including a biography in *Who's Who in America*, designation as Man of the Year by the Las Cruces Board of Realtors and as Citizen of the Year by the state group of realtors, and a Hall of Fame award by the Doña Ana County Historical Society. His honorary degrees include: Doctor of Laws from the University of Kentucky, Doctor of Civil Laws from Toledo University, Doctor of Engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Alfred University, Doctor of Humane Letters from St. Bonaventure, Doctor of Letters from Oklahoma Baptist University, and Doctor of Military Science from Pennsylvania Military College.

Among Hugh Milton's greater accomplishments was the part he played in removing politics from the business of education at New Mexico State University during his presidency from 1938 to 1941. As he reviewed memories of his colorful past during his final days in the winter of 1987, he recalled those years when America was ridding itself of the devastating effects of the Depression. Even though enrollment at the college remained fairly steady at the time, there was a constant struggle to maintain financial viability and to appease the many interests with ambitious agendas for themselves and the college. It was precisely then that the college began to be plagued with an annual deficit. Vigorous lobbying by the institution's principal administrators was required to maintain adequate funding. There was also considerable and constant pressure from Northern New Mexico politicians and even from some

local businessmen to merge the college with the University of New Mexico as a method of saving taxpayer dollars. Adding to the pressure of this move toward a merger were battle lines drawn as alternating Democrat and Republican governors took turns making political appointments to the Board of Regents of the college. The turnover rate among the regents in itself created inconsistency. They, of course, had the ability to make a college president's life intolerable so that many of the early presidents indeed resigned after only one or two years at the helm.

At the time Hugh Milton was named president, the regents had begun to exert undue influence on the hiring and firing of faculty members. They were also directly involved in spending university money. The situation, according to Milton himself, peaked in 1929, during the midpoint of Harry L. Kent's stewardship from 1921 to 1936. President Kent had been able to shrink the college's deficit, but his ability to ease the turmoil between the warring regents and the politicians seemed to be waning. By 1936, Kent was frankly no longer in control. He submitted his resignation, many said, because of pressure from the Board of Regents. Hugh Milton had been at the college since 1924 after earning a master's degree in mechanical engineering from Texas A & M College. He said his first five years in Las Cruces were relatively placid and he added that he admired Kent's stamina.

Besides the duties of president, Kent had also assumed the jobs of dean of agriculture, dean of students, dean of men and secretary of agriculture for the state of New Mexico. This very multiplicity of titles, however, obviously designed to save money, may have been the reason for a drop in the college's academic status. It had reached a milestone in 1926, when it was accredited by the North Central Association, but, by 1929, Kent's efforts to placate all the factions, added to his numerous responsibilities, diverted his attention from some emerging and disturbing trends. The college's faculty had not maintained credentials, only three had Ph.D.s, and the enrollment had only increased slightly from year to year while that of the University of New Mexico was growing by leaps and bounds. These facts were noted by the North Central Association.

As the Depression deepened in 1930, Democrat Governor Arthur Seligman cut \$10,000 from the college's allocation. Rumors sprang up that a new Board of Regents would decide to replace Kent. After the new board was appointed, it indeed began to decrease the size of the college staff, but it affirmed Kent's position though not for long. "A new political element decided we needed a change in administration," Milton said. He added, "During the years 1934 to 1938 (during which time he was serving as dean of mechanical engineering), there were three presidents and two acting presidents. Then North Central took us off the list—that meant our federal agriculture dollars would be taken away."

"They couldn't find anyone to be president and so they called me and said: 'Here's a kettle of fish'," Milton said in 1986. As the new president, he began a series of progressive changes. The School of Engineering was recognized by the Engineering Council for Professional Development, which guaranteed a certain amount of acceptance for its graduates in other states and by other schools. A committee on Group Life of Students was formed as well as an Academic Senate composed of faculty members and administrators, with the president and the Board of Regents retaining veto power. In spite of these improvements, a confrontation with North Central's investigators loomed just as Milton was officially installed as president in 1939 during the Golden Jubilee celebration.

At this time, the board members seemed to concern themselves primarily with trivial matters, for instance, one of them going on an Aggie sports junket. Milton felt, however, that the regents really continued to run the college. In the summer of 1939, some backstage maneuvering caused two of the regents to resign. The board then adopted a new personnel policy concerning tenure which temporarily helped to placate North Central. By mid-September, the president of the board had also resigned and his replacement had been named. A fund-raising drive for a new student union building was launched and the college seemed to be getting back on track. Nevertheless, the politics of the college still dominated a Las Cruces town meeting. Criticism had been raised about the replacement of a dean who was on the board.

The situation continued to worsen and, on March 29, 1940, the North Central Association discredited the college citing “political influences affecting the administration of the college” and “lack of competence to offer graduate work” as the primary causes. And there was more in the report: The faculty tenure system was deficient; there was no insurance nor sabbatical leaves; a former president had been inappropriately dismissed; another president had resigned after only two years due to a conflict with a regent and two faculty members; the Board of Regents was run by two politicians; the board was communicating directly with the instructional staff; the athletic program was unprofessional and not in keeping with institutional standards; and a dean of agriculture was serving as head of the departments of education and psychology.

In the history of NMSU, *That All May Learn*, published in 1972 by Dr. Simon F. Kropp, Professor Emeritus of History, the *Las Cruces Sun-News* was quoted as saying that the regents were controlling every function of the college’s administration, including expenditures, and it was the public’s perception that a political machine had run the college for most of the 1930’s. President Milton called Governor Miles who told him: “Take a lesson from me and we will fire the board; it’s your decision; I’ll do whatever you say.” As a result, the governor appointed a new board which Milton called his “million-dollar board.” Serving on it were William A. Keleher, an Albuquerque attorney, Frank Light, a Silver City banker, Martin A. Threet, a Las Cruces attorney, Albert K. Mitchell, a cattleman, and J. O. Seth, a Santa Fe attorney. It was a non-partisan board which immediately set to work regaining the college’s North Central accreditation. Milton later said: “Out of the dark period came an institution on the way to greater heights.”

Hugh Milton’s public-service presence in the Mesilla Valley spanned a period of more than seven decades. His leadership abilities caused him to exert a vast influence on the life and times of New Mexico citizens. He was known as a clear thinker who was disciplined, impartial

and decisive. His warm compassion, his reverence for his fellow humans brought him wide admiration. “Oh yes,” some said, “he helped me to get a grant to do an art project.” “Oh yes, General Milton was a philosopher who thought the best of everyone;” or “He was a Rousseau man, who believed in mankind’s inherent nobility and nature’s healing qualities,” said others. Among his papers in the Rio Grande Historical Collections are copies of personally composed speeches prepared and delivered on



*This statue of Hugh Milton stands near Milton Hall on the New Mexico State University campus. The statue was dedicated in May 1986. Photo courtesy of Cecil C. Post.*

numerous occasions throughout the nation. His elegantly-turned phrases inspired graduates at commencement ceremonies, enlightened federal administrators, impressed bankers and businessmen, soothed grieving families with sons lost in battle and comforted war veterans. “Unquestionably, the social order that is going to contribute to the constant advancement of mankind must be based upon the continuous uninhibited freedom of the human mind and actions, limited only by his consideration of his fellow man,” reads one of Milton’s speeches which seemingly spotlights his own dominant character trait.

At the end of World War II, Hugh Milton returned to the presidency of the college. He served for about a year when enrollment increased enormously due to the GI Bill. He was then appointed superintendent of New Mexico Military Institute in Roswell in 1947. The subsequent years seemed happy and productive for Hugh and his wife, Josephine. Their sons, Hugh III and John Baldwin, attended prep schools and colleges, grew up and moved away to start families of their own.

It was not until early 1961 that Milton returned to the Mesilla Valley, actually dividing his time between residences in Hillsboro and Las Cruces. He accepted a job as vice president for Public Relations and Development at the First National Bank of Doña Ana County. He was also busy with his side interests, showing special devotion to history and gardening. In the late 1960’s, he began a campaign to preserve Fort Selden, one of Douglas MacArthur’s boyhood homes. MacArthur’s father, Arthur MacArthur, had been commandant of the fort, built in the 1870’s. The person who owned Fort Selden at the time was Harry Baily. After Milton’s successful publicity campaign in support of the fort’s preservation, Bailey said he would turn over the fort to public ownership if an oversight group was formed. The group became the Doña Ana County Historical Society. Shortly there-after, the fort was designated a New Mexico State Park by the state legislature.

In keeping with his philosophy of life that the best and longest-lasting qualities focused on the spiritual, not the material, Hugh Milton, in his will, left a beautifully written and truly touching legacy to his descendants and

to all his friends. It reads as follows:

To my dear wife, who, throughout our life together, has been a great inspiration in periods of trial, I leave the memory that, as I depart this world, I do so with a deep sense of devotion and appreciation.

To my sons, I leave a restive world, one that I had hoped to see changed, but did not.

He urged his sons to find a way to bring peace to the world. In his legacy to his grandsons, Milton bequeathed them the joys of nature:

the thrilling dawn, the sport of the swimming hole, the streams in which to fish and meadows in which to romp

To his granddaughters, he said:

I leave to you that tenderness which you will so lavishly spread upon those less fortunate than yourselves.

To all, I leave the strength that comes from faith that man never dies. With this thought, and with a smile, and a wave of the hand, I go to explore an unknown land.

A friend and former neighbor of General Hugh M. Milton probably described him best as “A true southern gentleman, a man with an abiding faith in and concern for his fellow man, and most certainly a distinguished American.”

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**German Lass Routs  
Apache With Spunk,  
Burning Candle  
*Girl Sets Would-Be Kidnaper's  
Hair Aflame With Blaze Of  
Candle Used to Examine  
New Chicks***

**(As told by Miss Ormeda May to  
Margaret Page Hood)**

*This article appeared in an area newspaper, probably the El Paso Times, on Wednesday, January 5, 1938. It was submitted to this journal by Nancy Ann Warner. Miss Ormeda May was her great aunt.*

I remember the story my mother used to tell Brother Vincent and me when we were afraid to go to bed in the dark. “Children in my day,” mother would always say, “weren’t scared cats. There were too many real dangers for them to face for them to fuss over little things.”

Mother came to this country from Germany with her parents soon after the troubles of 1848. I imagine how she looked, a stocky German madchen with long flaxen braids and bright blue eyes. Her name was Elizabeth Rohman. They came across the country by stage coach and arrived in Juarez sometime about 1851.

Uncle Anatole, my father’s brother had a fine prosperous mercantile business in the thriving town of Doña Ana. That little community in those days was a busy place with many soldiers stationed there.

It was the spring of the year when mother came to visit Uncle Anatole in Doña Ana. The salt cedar trees were covered with pink plumes and the willows were green along the river bank. Mocking birds would sing all night long as they sat in the moonlight atop the tall yuccas on the edge of the mesa, and fat meadow larks with black bibs on their yellow breasts would perch on the fence posts and warble up the morning sun from over the Organ Mountains. Mother thought Doña Ana was a fine place. She was a typical German girl, loving all animals and living creatures.

But, best of all, so she would always tell us, she loved the little brown hen which Uncle Anatole had given her. Bidy was setting on a dozen eggs in one of the outhouses and every day mother would take her crumbs from the table and peek at the smooth eggs with their hidden mysteries.

“Those eggs seemed long a ‘hatching’,” mother would continue her story. “But at last toward dusk one evening Donaciana, the little Mexican kitchen maid who was about my age, came running to tell me the chicks were chipping their shells.”

“I jumped up from the supper table and grabbed a lighted candle from the shelf, ‘I must see those chicks,’ I told my uncle.” “Better not go outside, it’s getting dark,” he cautioned, “I remember the Apaches were seen across the river early this morning.”

“Pooh! Indians, I’m not afraid,” said Elizabeth,

and shielding her candle with her hand, she ran out the door and to the house which was at the edge of Uncle Anatole's property, lying close to the mesa.

Sure enough, the brown hen's eggs had hatched. The child sat her candle carefully on the ground and stooping over the nest gently touched the yellow downy heads of the baby chicks. Twelve of them. They were hers and she would take them back with her to Juárez. As she played with the bright-eyed little things she forgot the time. But the wind coming through the open door flickered the flame of the candle, she looked up and noticed that the glow of sunset had entirely faded from the western slope of the Organs. She sprang to her feet, snatched the candle and started toward the house. She might pooh! at Indians to her uncle, but in her heart she felt a shiver of dread at the growing darkness of the lonely mesa night. She flew through the corral and had nearly rounded the corner of the 'dobe wall when a dark figure rose in her path.

Before she could open her mouth to scream a hand covered her face, and she felt herself tossed like a sack of corn over a muscular shoulder. An Apache had her!

But mother was a stout-hearted German girl. She'd crossed an ocean and a continent—she certainly wouldn't let herself be kidnaped by a wild Indian without putting up a fight. Her candle stub was still burning brightly in her hand. Quick as a wink she thrust its flame into the Indian's long greasy hair. She'd show him a German girl wasn't to be stolen like a sack of corn.

"Phew! ," mother would say to us children and how we would laugh at her, "I can still remember the awful smell of that burning Indian hair. It was so oily it flared up like a wick soaked in bear grease."

With his head as bright as a torch, the Apache dropped Elizabeth, ran for his horse and disappeared in the direction of the river. "I watched his head flickering through the darkness," mother would always finish her story, "and that was the last of Mr. Apache and his kidnaping of a maiden from across the sea."

## BOOK REVIEWS

**NEW MEXICO'S BUFFALO SOLDIERS, 1866 - 1900**  
by Monroe Lee Billington. Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1991. \$29.95.

Though meticulously researched, and copiously illustrated with sketches, photographs, and maps, this book is still easy to read and well worth the time to do so. Dr. Billington (Professor Emeritus of History at New Mexico State University) has brought to life a little-known segment of history, that of African-American soldiers who served in the United States Army after the Civil War. Most of the material concerns their service in the New Mexico Territory. The New Mexico Indians thought that the skin and hair of the soldiers resembled the fur of the buffalo so they called them *Buffalo Soldiers*. The blacks accepted the appellation as an honor.

The mission of the United States Army in the New Mexico Territory, and thus that of the black soldiers, was to protect people and property from hostile Indians. However, they

were, on occasion, used to help put down civil disturbances such as the Lincoln County War and the Colfax County War.

Black soldiers constituted about ten percent of the United States Army in the post-Civil War years. They, however, made up about fifty percent of the personnel in many western commands. The black soldiers were not readily accepted in the New Mexico Territory. The editor of the Las Cruces newspaper exclaimed in an 1879 editorial: "Let the Ninth [Cavalry] be dismounted or disbanded ... [so that its members] might contribute to the nation's wealth as pickers of cotton and hoers of corn, or to its amusement as a travelling minstrel troupe." In fact, some suppliers doing business with the Army, sharing these feelings, provided inferior food, animals and equipment to units staffed by black soldiers.

Despite the prejudice and the many obstacles the *Buffalo Soldiers* encountered, they contributed much to the New Mexico Territory. They built military roads and telegraph lines, escorted trains and stages, protected travelers from Indians and robbers, and helped subdue and control the hostile Indians.

Dorothy Thurmond Shannon  
*Las Cruces, New Mexico*

## **CLYDE TOMBAUGH - DISCOVERER OF PLANET PLUTO**

by David H. Levy. Tucson and London: University of Arizona Press, 1991. \$14.95.

The establishment of a Department of Astronomy at New Mexico State University had just been approved in the spring of 1969 when I met Clyde Tombaugh while interviewing for a faculty position. Now, after almost 25 years of exchanging opinions and puns, we have both retired; but we continue our "discussions" at daily lunches. In 1985, I met David Levy, who

had by then begun a long series of interviews of Tombaugh, and his friends and colleagues. Levy was then and still is an active amateur astronomer as well as a professional writer. Both Levy and Tombaugh love the science of astronomy and together, they have produced a very effective account of Clyde's life.

The book gives us views of the developing midwestern wheatland and the evolving farm and scientific technology of the early 20th Century. The author thus establishes a backdrop for the Pluto discovery, not only covering Clyde's youth but also some of the history of the era as described and experienced by Tombaugh. Levy also relates the anxieties of dry land farming, the excitement of landing the dream job, the thrill of success, the anguish of accomplishments misunderstood, and the disappointment of finding loyalty ignored. The material describing Tombaugh's discovery is well-documented and the story covers well the excitement generated by that discovery.

Part of the impact of the biography is the description of the life led by Clyde and his wife, Patsy, during the years of hard, productive work without any astounding discoveries as he carried out the tedious search for trans-Pluto planets. This includes the Tombaugh's last days at Lowell Observatory and their almost unexplainable failure to secure first-class status there. Levy provides a partial explanation in terms frank enough to upset some of the present-day Lowell staff yet clear enough to represent reasonably well the feelings of the Tombaugh's. In a tragic life story, the biography would end with the unanticipated departure of the Tombaugh's from Lowell Observatory, but Clyde Tombaugh was blessed with a long life and had ample time to move in other directions.

We are treated by Levy to the satisfying account of Tombaugh's steady and productive recovery as a systems scientist at White Sands Missile Range and as a university professor. At White Sands, practical examples of his skills, experience, and common sense are recounted in some detail. Levy also relates faithfully and with good humor many favorite anecdotes told by Clyde at the lunch table.

Astronomy departments in the United States are counted by the dozens, not by the thousands as in the case of departments

like English or chemistry. It was not an easy task to get one started at New Mexico State University, but Tombaugh provided the guidance and by 1969, the university had a new Ph.D. program in astronomy. Tombaugh had many happy, professorial days at NMSU and the department gradually became well established in the international community of astronomy. Levy concludes by describing Clyde's daily life, having lunches with the Bunch, spending afternoons at his office and attending weekly colloquia. In an appendix, Levy provides a bit of icing on the cake by describing his own follow-up of Tombaugh's observations in the 1930's of a comet and a nova. Levy relates the story of his personally-conducted investigations and ends the biography with the 1990 confirmation of Tombaugh's 1931 Nova.

At an October 1993 meeting of the Division of Planetary Science of the American Astronomical Society where as many as 25 Pluto papers were read, I attended several Pluto sessions and was particularly intrigued by one that described the possible existence of objects like Pluto but more distant. A curious astronomer asked, "Would not Tombaugh have detected such objects in his survey?" The speaker's answer focused on the dimness of such distant objects and the fact that they would be beyond the detectability of Tombaugh's equipment. I heard not even one of these young people (about the age of Tombaugh's grandchildren) say, "Well, may be he missed it."

Since the publication of Levy's book, Tombaugh has continued to interact with students and faculty with questions and discussions about the current status of astronomical observations and theory. The department that he helped establish in the late 1960's now has produced 30 Ph.D. astronomers, and 15 M.S. graduates, and has become a participant in operating a 140-inch telescope at Apache Peak near Sunspot, New Mexico.

Herbert A. Beebe  
*Professor Emeritus of Astronomy*  
*Former Head, Department of Astronomy,*  
*New Mexico State University*

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