

SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW



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The *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* (ISSN-1076-9072) is looking for original articles concerning the Southwestern Border Region for future issues. Biography, local and family histories, oral history, and well-edited documents are welcome. Charts, illustrations or photographs are encouraged to accompany submissions. We are also in need of book reviewers, proofreaders, and an individual or individuals interested in marketing and distribution.

Copies of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* are available for \$6.00. If ordering by mail, please include \$2.00 for postage and handling. Correspondence regarding the review should be directed to the Editor of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* at Dona Ana County Historical Society, 500 N. Water St. Las Cruces, NM 88001-1224.

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Editor's Page

This issue marks another important step in the evolution of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*. My predecessor, Bob Hart, encouraged me to undertake changes that he believed would improve the quality, expand the readership, and ensure the viability of our publication. With the approval of the Board of Directors of the Doña Ana County Historical Society (DACHS), a number of changes have been implemented over the course of the last four issues.

One of the first significant changes was to broaden the focus of the review from southern New Mexico (defined as being south of Interstate 40) to include west Texas, eastern Arizona, and northern Mexico, that is, to include our most immediate neighbors. Along with this adjustment, the limit of fifteen pages for each contribution was lifted to allow for more fully developed articles. In addition, other types of materials, such as edited documents and oral histories are now being sought. This issue presents an example of each.

Perhaps the most daunting challenge for a publication such as this one, is to attract a sufficient number of good contributions to produce a solid issue each year. By the time the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* approached its eighth issue, in 2001, the sources of family reminiscences and local history were clearly drying up. This made it increasingly difficult to amass enough material for the annual issue, particularly when one considers that a single issue of the review in its large format had approximately as much material in it as four issues of a standard historical journal. Frankly, this situation made it impossible to achieve the goals that Editor Hart outlined.

With this in mind, I extensively researched historical journals from around the country and came up with a proposal for a complete redesign of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*. The salient elements of this new look are a smaller format, which is typical of scholarly and popular journals, and a more traditional font that seems to me more in keeping with a journal dedicated to the publication of historical material. This new format makes it possible for the editorial board to be more selective and, at the same time, eases the task of putting together an issue.

Most readers who have commented have applauded the changes in the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*, some however, have voiced strong criticism. Still, those who disapproved also offered constructive suggestions. A further redesign of the review's front matter and this editor's page are a response to such comments, as is greater attention to books reviews with regional interest. Change is difficult, but as Winston Churchill said, "To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often."

Rick Hendricks
Editor

Roy Rogers Married a New Mexico Girl

by Elvis Fleming

Theater Len “Mesquite” Slye stepped out on the stage of the Capitán Theater in Roswell in 1933, little did his sparse audience realize that they were looking at a future superstar and hall of fame member. Neither did Slye anticipate how his life was about to be changed as a result of his “gig” in Roswell.

“Mesquite” Slye took the name “Roy Rogers” in October 1937 when he starred in the Republic Pictures movie, “Under Western Stars.” He went on to star in 91 feature films and 102 half-hour television programs.

From 1943 to 1955, Rogers was the top box office attraction among cowboy stars. He was usually in the top ten male stars in movie receipts. His recordings also gave him a wide audience as a singer.

On 19 August 1988, Rogers was given the Western Hall of Fame’s President Reagan Award in Los Angeles to honor him for his fifty years of providing a wholesome role model for America’s youth. In October of the same year, he was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville for his role in the development of Western music.¹ Leonard Slye was born on 5 November 1911, in Cincinnati, Ohio, to Andy and Mattie Slye. Part of his childhood was spent on a farm at Duck Run, Ohio. The family moved to California in 1930 and found work picking fruit.²

Both before and after moving to California, young Slye was involved with various musical groups who entertained at parties and dances. In the Long Beach-Los Angeles area, he participated in a series of ensembles of professional musicians who played personal appearances and radio shows. One such group was “Cactus Mac and his O-Bar-O Cowboys.”

In the summer of 1933, the Cactus Mac Cowboys barnstormed the Southwest, managing to keep body and soul together in that depression year by hunting rabbits and by asking their audi-



Publicity photograph of the O-Bar-O Cowboys, c. 1933; 1-r: “Cyclone,” Len “Mesquite” Slye/Roy Rogers, “Old Uncle Joe” (radio announcer), Tim Spencer, Bill “Slumber” Nichols.



Arline Wilkins' photograph in the Roswell High School Year-book for 1931.

ences to donate food to supplement the meager box office returns of their shows.

When "Cactus Mac" Peters left the group, Slye assumed that name and led the troupe - thinking that nobody knew what Peters looked like anyway. Other members of the group were Tim Spencer, Bill "Slumber" Nichols, and one known only as "Cyclone." After the band arrived in Roswell, Peter's cousin came looking for him to collect a debt, so Slye decided to change his name to "Mesquite" Slye. Roswell was the only place he ever used that stage name.³

Reaching Roswell a week before their scheduled appearance at the Capitán Theater at 314 North Main Street, the

O-Bar-O Cowboys checked into the Greenhaven Tourist Camp at 612 East Second Street. Some accounts indicate that the proprietor, C.O. Greene, allowed them to camp at Greenhaven on credit until their theater engagement. They apparently moved into a room later during their two-to-three-week stay at Roswell.⁴

Another version of the story holds that the Cowboys talked Walt E. Whitmore, Sr., into paying their tab in exchange for playing live programs on his radio station. Whitmore had established KGFL at 507 North Main Street in 1931. It is known for certain that the Cowboys did play live music on KGFL during the days they were waiting to appear at the Capitán.

During one of their broadcasts, Slye allowed that "women nowadays can't make lemon pies like Mom used to make." This challenge had the desired effect - an eighteen-year-old girl and her mother showed up at the Greenhaven with two lemon pies. That girl was Arline Wilkins, daughter of Prentice D., Sr., and Lucy Wilkins, of 701 East Second Street, across the street from the Greenhaven. Ms. Wilkins was a 1932 graduate of Roswell High School. Slye was attracted to Ms. Wilkins and tried to see her as much as he could while he was in town.

"Mesquite" Slye and the O-Bar-O Cowboys finally played at the Capitán Theater, but they did not make any money out of it. Slye suggested that they play for a square dance; they may have already played for one earlier. Where the dance was held is not known, but it netted the troupe \$90.

Other members of the group also dated Roswell girls while they were in town. From Roswell, they went to Lubbock, Texas, where Tim Spencer met

the girl that would be his life-long wife and soul mate.

The musicians returned to Los Angeles in September 1933. After short stints with various bands and radio stations, Slye talked Spencer and Bob Nolan into forming a new singing group, the "Pioneer Trio." After Karl and Hugh Farr had joined the group, a radio announcer inadvertently called the group the "Sons of the Pioneers," and the name stuck. The Sons of the Pioneers launched into a brilliant career that, with obvious changes in personnel, still continues today.



Wedding of Len Slye/Roy Rogers and Arline Wilkins at her parents' home in Roswell on June 11, 1936. Attendants are her brother, Don, and his wife. Courtesy of the Historical Center for Southeast New Mexico, Roswell.

Meanwhile, Slye and Ms. Wilkins were writing to each other, and she went to California to visit him.⁵ This unlikely courtship culminated in the marriage of Grace Arline Wilkins, twenty-one, and Leonard Franklin Slye, twenty-four, on 11 June 1936, in the Wilkins home in Roswell. Reverend D.B. Titus, pastor of Roswell's First Christian Church, performed the wedding. Arline's brother, Don Wilkins, Jr., and his wife were witnesses.⁶

Don Wilkins worked as advertising manager for the *Roswell Daily Record*. Wilkins, Sr., was a truck farmer and had a plant nursery on East Second Street from about 1918 until about 1943.⁷

Arline went to Hollywood with Slye, and he continued his singing and acting career. It is beyond the scope of this article to delineate all of Len Slye/Roy Rogers' accomplishments, but one noteworthy event was the movie,

“King of the Cowboys” in 1943. That movie earned him the title of “King of the Cowboys,” which he was called by his fans for the rest of his life.⁸

Roy and Arline adopted a baby girl, Cheryl Darlene, in 1940. Linda Lou was born to them on 18 April 1943. Their son Roy “Dusty” Rogers, Jr., was born on 28 October 1946. Six days later, on 3 November, Arline died of an embolism.⁹

Roy acquired his famous Palomino horse, Trigger, in 1938. Trigger was always given second billing, even ahead of Gabby Hayes and Dale Evans.¹⁰

Dale Evans started co-starring with Rogers in 1944. They eventually starred in thirty-five movies together. They were married on 31 December 1947, on a ranch in Oklahoma.¹¹

When Ms. Evans made a personal appearance in Roswell in 1980, she stated that she felt as if she had ties to Roswell, although she had never visited the city before. Her reasons were that her husband’s first wife had come from Roswell, and Dale’s uncle had been a guard stationed at the Roswell prisoner-of-war camp during World War II.¹²

Roswell has always taken pride in the fact that one of its daughters was married to one of the most wholesome movie stars Hollywood ever produced: Roy Rogers, King of the Cowboys.

Elvis E. Fleming is a distinguished scholar and the author of numerous books and articles. Two recent books are *J.B. Billy: Mathews: Biography of a Lincoln County Deputy* and *Captain Joseph C. Lea: From Confederate Guerrilla to New Mexico Patriarch*. The author is a frequent contributor to the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*.

Endnotes

1. *Roswell Daily Record*, 21 August 1988.
2. Pete Martin, “Cincinnati Cowboy” *The Saturday Evening Post*, 9 June 1945; “Rogers, Roy,” *Current Biography 1983*, 328-31; Elvis E. Fleming, “Roy Rogers and Arline Wilkins,” *Treasures of History II: Chaves County Vignettes* (Roswell: Chaves County Historical Society, 1991), 158-60.
3. Frank Rasky, *Roy Rogers: King of the Cowboys* (New York: Messner, 1955), 73-76.
4. Frances K. Williams, Personal Secretary to Roy Rogers and General Manager of the Roy Rogers-Dale Evans Museum, Victorville, California, letter (name of recipient withheld by request), 3 August 1988. Ms. Williams’ letter refutes local folklore that Rogers lived in Roswell at times, although he and Arline did visit her family occasionally
5. Williams.
6. Leonard Franklin Slye and Grace Arline Wilkins, *Marriage License*, 11 June 1936. Chaves County Clerk’s Office, Chaves. County Administrative Center, Roswell, New Mexico.
7. *Roswell City Directory*, 1918-1943.
8. Martin, “Cincinnati Cowboy”
9. Rasky, *King of the Cowboys*.
10. Martin, “Cincinnati Cowboy”
11. *Ibid.*
12. Elvis E. Fleming, *New Wine: The Story of Gateway Baptist Church, 1978-1983* (Roswell: Gateway Baptist Church, 1984), 50.

The Battle of Mesilla: A Rebel View

by Richard Wadsworth

In August 1861 a young Texas Confederate soldier sat down to write his mother a letter. He had just passed through a series of important historical events and wanted to tell his mother what happened. His name was Peyton S. Graves Jr., and he was present at the Battle of Mesilla on 25 July 1861. His account of that battle, unpublished until now, is enlightening and important. It should be said that Peyton Graves is only assumed to be the author, though the evidence is strong. Legend has it that the last page of the letter, with Graves's signature, contained personal revelations about family matters, and therefore that page, and his signature, were destroyed by the family. That is most unfortunate, as Graves was in the middle of telling about what really happened to the Federal troops during the surrender at San Augustine Springs on 27 July 1861. The Graves account breaks off just at the point Baylor's command reaches the top of San Augustine Pass, just before the final surrender. It should be noted that a Private Peyton Graves Jr. is listed as being a member of Company "A", Texas Mounted Rifles, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel John Baylor.

Fort Bliss Texas

August 8th 1861

8 O'clock at night

Dear Mother,

As many important events have occurred since writing my last letter to you I now seat myself to detail in full all these events as well as I can. Lt. Col. Baylor left this fort on Tuesday Evng. July 23rd with Capt Hardeman's Co numbering 85 men, the horses of the rest being unable to travel, Capt Stafford's Co about 85 men, Capt. Teel's about 40 men and a number of citizens from El Paso making in all some 300 men for Fort Fillmore Arizona distant 50 miles. The order to march was given about six o'clock in the evening and we started. We travelled until about 3 o'clock in the morning and camped about 24 miles from Bliss until daylight. At daylight we mounted and travelled six miles farther on where grass was more abundant. Here we remained until about 4 o'clock in the evening when we again mounted and pursued our journey. We travelled about six miles and turned off of the road and waited until the approach of night when we again started through the wood towards Fort Fillmore. We rode up to within six hundred yards of the fort, stopped and were ordered to look to our guns and be ready. Our intention being to charge in to the Fort just at day light, rush to the doors of the barracks and shoot anyone who appeared until they surrendered. A guard was placed and

we laid down. About 3 o'clock in the morning of the 25th we were awakened by the hearing of the alarm roll within the Fort. Our guard was called in and we found out that one of it, a member of Ted's Co, had deserted our ranks and gone in the Fort and told on us. We having no artillery could not then stay where we were, so we mounted and crossed the river and started to a little town called Santa Thomas [Santo Tomas] where 2 Cos of U.S. Infantry were stationed. But when we arrived they had left in a great hurry. Knapsacks full of clothing, blankets provisions in abundance and a few arms swords & pistols just strowed [*sic*] on the ground in the barracks. By permission of the Col we appropriated all these except the provisions which we could not carry on our horses. We captured their picket guard 8 in no. which they had forgotten to call in, they were in such a hurry to leave. We then started for the Town of Mesilla about 4 miles distant. We arrived there about 10 o'clock A.M. of the 25th and were greeted with every manifestation of joy by the citizens. Provisions were at once brought forth both for men and horses and were devoured with a rapidity truly astonishing, but we were tired and had starved for 24 hours riding all the time. We had just finished our dinner and were preparing to take a nap when scouts came in from the direction of Fillmore and reported large numbers of Regulars crossing the river and coming upon us having 2 howitzers. We were immediately marched down to our respective places as show by a Platt [*sic*] herewith enclosed. About 4 o'clock the cloud of dust rose and the enemy appeared in line of battle marching up to our position. At the distance of 300 yards they halted, planted their cannon and formed in line of battle. A flag of truce came marching up to our line borne by Lieut McNally commanding their cavalry, who approaching Col Baylor said, "I am authorized to demand an unconditional surrender of the town and yourself and forces." Their force amounted to 535 men. Col Baylor replied, If you want the town! Come and take it! And as for myself and forces, we will fight a little on that! The officer returned and in a few minutes the deafening roar of the cannon sounded in our ears! The first bomb struck the corner of the house upon the top of which Teels Co were stationed in full view and run them off in a hurry. The next one struck and bursted at the tree just over Stafford's Co, They also being on the top of a house and rousted them from their place. They were then

ordered to another part of the town and we saw no more of either Co until after the fight. Our position was behind an adobe wall 2 feet high with a cornfield on our left. Our position was not known to the enemy until after they routed the other Cos off of the houses. Then they discovered us and opened upon us with cannister, which consists of a bag of large ounce balls placed in the cannon, sometimes containing a hundred balls and never less than 75! They understood handling their cannon for the balls whistled and sang around our heads and in the wall which were behind and over us in the wall behind us and some knocked dirt upon several of the boys. One fell upon Derden's [*sic*] hand and some upon Cox's hat. They continued firing upon us for over an hour during which time they shot 8 or ten guns at us. When the first gun boomed I and the boys being unaccustomed to being shot at and the majority of them never having heard a cannon fire, that they would flinch a little and get scared but on the contrary they were as cool and as unconcerned as if they were going to eat dinner. I never was cooler in my life and during the battle I did not get excited a particle! We laughed and joked and waved our hats during the time the cannon were firing. After they had shot with their cannon the command was given to the cavalry and infantry to charge. The order was obeyed and they had advanced to within 250 yards when Col Baylor told one or two good shots to fire at the leader of the cavalry Lieut. McNally. Immediately one man [W.G. Cressing] leveled his gun took deliberate aim and fired. Col Baylor who was watching the effect of the shot said "You knocked him off his horse" and then told about ten to fire. They fired and then he told about ten or twenty to fire [*sic*] and then about [?] not quite so many opened a brisk fire as they were advancing to the charge. The enemy then returned our fire some and nearly all fired up in the air, but about 50 whistled around us and buried themselves in the wall before and behind us and wheeled and retreated in great disorder! A party of some 5 or six then went out, including myself, in the corn on the left to reconnoiter. We came hack and I told Col Baylor that they were preparing to retreat back to Fillmore. He then sent out some others who reported the same. He then ordered about 30 of us to go out and shoot at them from the corn. We went out but they had gone almost out or reach and our ammunition being very scarce, each man not having over ten rounds we refrained from firing. The enemy loss was

Lieut McNally wounded in the shoulder one sergeant killed 1 private 2 balls in his forehead and 2 in his breast another shot in the breast and five others slightly wounded and one horse. One ball grazed Lieut Brooks arm on the inside and broke his sword all to pieces and one man had the third finger of his left hand shot off at the second joint and was picked up by one of our boys the next morning on the battle field. Our loss was none! The enemy retreated to Fillmore in a great hurry!

I forgot to say that while I was out in the corn reconnoitering I heard the officers command the men to charge four times but they swore they would not do it that they were not going to go up there and be shot down like dogs. We then heard the commands given to retreat. We went in from the corn and told Col Baylor of it. He listened and being satisfied called out for three cheers for Jeff Davis, which were given with a hearty good-will. Immediately afterwards we heard a tremendous cheering in Town and afterwards found out that Stafford's Co was cheering for us whipping them. We have since learned that there were about 15 killed and the same number wounded. Parson Joyce before we fired before the order to fire was given, said, "Boys I don't like to shoot at them, but they fired first and levelling [*sic*] his gun he took deliberate aim and fired. As he is a splendid shot I doubt not but that he killed his man. We slept where we were that night expecting an attack by day break but it did not come! All that day we stayed in Mesilla sending out scouts. We saw a huge smoke arising from Fillmore but did not know what it was. Again we slept on our arms in our (adobe) and in the morning our scouts reported that they had set fire to Fillmore and at dark had retreated in the direction of Fort Stanton. Immediately we mounted and hastened in pursuit. When we got across the river all except our Co 85 in number went down to the fort to secure the property and we hastened in pursuit. About 20 miles from the fort we came upon a few stragglers (Infantry) laying under bushes nearly dead for water, the day was infernally hot. We secured their guns and rolled ahead in a gallop, soon we came upon more and more Infantry in fact they were laying under every bush nearby crazy for water. To all these we gave our canteens. We then saw a dust on a high hill at the mouth of the pass over the mountains and advancing discovered that it was a body of Cavalry numbering 120 (and we only 85).

We advanced upon them and thought surely we would now have a fight in earnest, as they were in so strong a position that 100 of us could whip a thousand if we were in such a position, but we got within 400 yards of them Col Baylor, who was right in front of me, I having asked leave to be in front and being the front man of all, raised a yell and charged for them. They broke and ran as fast as they could the other way—and formed again in the Canyon where their cannon were. We without halting charged ahead and when within 400 yards again they turned and fled. We charged on up and took their cannon where one of them (Infantry) fired at one of us and was immediately shot through the heart by Capt Hardeman. Stafford's Co having arrived at last, we charged on up to where the enemy Cavalry were formed on the top of the mountain when within 400 yards of them they turned again and each man rolled out for himself right down the mountain passing men women and children lying under the bushes starving for water. As we passed them we could not stop so we threw [sic] them our canteens although we were nearly famishing for water. We charged on and our Co was ordered to charge ahead and...¹

The letter breaks off at this point because there was supposedly some information concerning the father of the soldier that was of a personal family nature and was discarded before the letter was sold. The entire letter, as a historical document, is most important for the light it shines on the Battle of Mesilla and for the corroborative detail it contains for confirming the description Colonel Baylor left behind of what happened during that battle and thereafter. Baylor's was the only written description of these events, given by a person who directly participated on the southern side, until this letter recently surfaced.

There are a few problems with the narrative from a historical standpoint. Private Graves disputes the accounts of Major Isaac Lynde and Dr. James Cooper McKee as to the name of the officer who rode forth to demand the Confederates surrender the town. Lynde and McKee stated it was Lieutenant Edward Brooks, adjutant of the Third Infantry Regiment. Graves said he was sure it was Lieutenant McNally, of the cavalry force. His familiarity with the names of the officers of the Federal side is a bother, although it is possible Graves attained these names through stories after the battle. This author believes Private Graves was mistaken and that Brooks was the officer who tendered the demand for surrender. That would have been the regimental adjutant's duty in the name of the commanding officer, Major Lynde.²

The most compelling evidence that this letter is authentic comes from the story Private Graves tells about the finding of the fingers of the wounded Federal soldier. Recent developments at the Fort Fillmore Cemetery (2000) may help verify Graves's entire account. In October 2000 a group of interested individuals, operating under the guidance of a professional archaeologist and with state sponsorship, excavated a one meter by one meter grid at the southern edge of the Fort Fillmore Cemetery in an attempt to confirm the presence of soldier burials at the cemetery. Legend has as many as ninety burials there; this total remains unconfirmed.³

Army regulations operating during the 1850s required a wooden coffin for military burials, and an appropriate ceremony. A head board with the name of the soldier buried in the grave was not required by regulations, as it would be from the 1860s onward. Hence, there were no headboards at the Fort Fillmore Cemetery. The officer commanding the post would have followed these regulations to the letter, given the proper opportunity to do so. Army regulations were the daily burden of every officer. To violate them in any way would be to court the displeasure of the military authorities, and possibly lead to a court-martial. Only a cataclysmic event would have prevented the proper burial procedure from taking place. Such a cataclysmic event took place at the post just after the Battle of Mesilla.

During the excavation of the one meter by one meter grid a proper regulation military burial was uncovered on the south side of the grid. A wooden coffin was unearthed, as would be expected, although something was definitely wrong. The coffin had been broken up and some of the wood as well as the upper torso and head of the soldier was pushed to one side. The reason for this was that a second burial had been placed so near the first that the initial burial was disturbed to accommodate the fresh burial. The second body was laid out in a very straight and natural fashion, obviously with great care by those who knew him. The bones of this second body were undisturbed.⁴

There were problems with this second burial arising from Army regulations. There was no wooden coffin present, yet the man was definitely a soldier. He wore a mostly disintegrated pair of blue wool pants which had one tan bone button as a closure near the top. This type of button was used in the 1850s for army pants and was a common find at Fort Fillmore. There was no coat, shirt or shoes; the reason being that the man had only recently been operated upon, probably dying while in surgery at the post surgeon's hospital down at the fort. One of his hands had been surgically removed and was not with the body.⁵

Private Graves told of finding the fingers from a hand on the battlefield at Mesilla. Was this unusual non-regulation burial that wounded soldier? Although we can never know for sure the evidence is compelling. First, there is the amputated hand. Second, the burial was obviously a hurried procedure,

lacking a regulation coffin, just the kind of burial one might expect given the turmoil at the fort on 25-26 July 1861, when all activities were based on a hasty abandonment of the post. Only such a need would have the post commander skirt regulations in this fashion, neglecting to provide a coffin or proper ceremony. The post command had other things to do in those most turbulent of times.

There is one final point to be made concerning the burial at Fort Fillmore Cemetery. The man had odd red-colored pock marks on the face. Were these the result of a shotgun blast fired by some Confederate, which also struck his hand? If so, the soldier was at close range to the enemy when he was hit, perhaps by one of the Confederates in the cornfield, as described by Graves.⁶

In my book, *Incident At San Augustine Springs*, which is concerned with Major Isaac Lynde's surrender of seven companies of the Seventh Infantry Regiment and three companies of Mounted Rifles (Graves calls them cavalry), at San Augustine Springs on 27 July 1861, the failure of the Federal rear guard is pointed to as the reason for the surrender. In this letter Private Graves backs up that assertion. He notes no infantry rear guard forming to try to stop the Texas cavalry.⁷

Major Lynde was given credit by his worst enemies for establishing a two-company infantry rear guard. Where was this rear guard when the Confederate cavalry arrived on the scene? Army regulations in July 1861 required a rear guard to "cover the movements of the troops to which they belong, and to hold the enemy in check."⁸ The regulations say nothing about a hot sun or thirst or anything else. If the rear guard were to cave in, no matter the reason, Lynde's column which was made up of men, women, children, public property, regimental animals, et al. would be lost. Colonel Baylor and now Private Graves, make it clear that the infantry rear guard did not do its job; the presence of an infantry rear guard was not detected during the engagement.

It is also well documented that Major Isaac Lynde assigned Captain Alfred Gibbs the job of commanding the cavalry rear guard to back up the infantry rear guard which, Lynde believed erroneously, was doing its job. Gibbs testified to that fact, but stated he thought he had freedom of action to do what he wanted, rather than satisfy the Army regulations' definition for rear guard service. It was Gibbs who gave the orders for the cavalry rear guard to abandon each defensive position without firing. Private Graves was soldier enough to know that at one point Gibbs's cavalry held a position on the ground of which Graves stated. "they were in so strong a position that 100 of us could whip a thousand if we were in such a position." Colonel Baylor stated a like sentiment in his report on the Federal cavalry action at San Augustine Pass. Because of this, the Confederate cavalry bore down on a stunned Isaac Lynde, waiting at San Augustine Springs for news of how

his officers were performing their duties. In fact, they were not.⁹ As one final thought I would like to address the most famous anecdote to come out of the surrender at San Augustine Springs. This is the drunken soldier myth, a myth with which most people knowledgeable about the incident are familiar. Everybody seems to love a good yarn. According to this fable the Federal soldiers placed whiskey in their canteens instead of water, then proceeded to get drunk during their long march. That's why the rear guard wasn't there. They were all partying. Private Graves made no mention of drunken Yankee soldiers gathered up on the route. I am sure he would have loved to pass on such a story to his mother, if it were true. Colonel Baylor, in his after-action report, did not mention drunken Federal soldiers, nor did any other participant in the battle, to include the Yankee-hating secessionist newspaper in Mesilla. The drunken soldier myth is a lie, probably initiated in the 1870s, but, since it is so appealing to human nature, this author is sure one hundred years from now will still find the myth heartily endorsed.”

The owner of the Graves letter wishes to remain anonymous. A copy of the letter will be placed on file at New Mexico State University. There is a map drawn by Graves of the positions at Mesilla. That has not been included with this article because future enhancements of the map will be required before it will be ready for publication.

Richard Wadsworth lives in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico and is retired with thirty years government service at the White Sands Missile Range. He is a published author of two books, *Forgotten Fortress: Fort Millard Fillmore and Antebellum New Mexico* and *Incident at San Augustine Springs*.

Endnotes

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|---|---|
| 1. Peyton S. Graves to his mother (name unknown), Letter, 8 Aug. 1861. | 72. |
| 2. Richard W. Wadsworth, <i>Incident at San Augustine Springs: A Hearing for Major Isaac Lynde</i> (Las Cruces, N. Mex.: Yucca Tree Press, 2002), 241, 242. | 4. Ibid., 371. |
| 3. Richard W. Wadsworth, <i>Forgotten Fortress: Fort Millard Fillmore and Antebellum New Mexico</i> (Las Cruces, N. Mex.: Yucca Tree Press, 2003), 368- | 5. Ibid., 371-72. |
| | 6. Ibid. |
| | 7. Wadsworth, <i>Incident</i> , 349-52. |
| | 8. Ibid. |
| | 9. Ibid., 301 |
| | 10. Ibid., 336-42. |

John Corbett: Deming's Earliest Soda Bottler

Bill Lockhart

Prior to the arrival of the railroads, Southern New Mexico and Western Texas were very isolated from the more industrialized areas of the United States. Travel in the country was predominantly east to west, rather than north to south. To the east, the closest center of shipping and production was San Antonio, Texas, a long, dry wagon-journey away. Equally distant and difficult to reach were the ports of California, the main shipping points to the west. Because of this isolation, glass of any form was scarce. A few enterprising entrepreneurs braved the risk of loss through breakage and Indian attack to ship in bottled goods, but these were the exceptions rather than the norm. In 1880, as the Southern Pacific railroad pushed its way west across New Mexico to El Paso, Texas, and the Achison, Topeka, and Santa Fe railroad began wending its way south, all this changed. Bottles of every description flooded into the southern part of New Mexico Territory.

Imported soft drinks, beer, and other bottled goods soon filled the shelves of stores in Socorro, Deming and other southern New Mexico towns. Soon, however, another idea awakened in the minds of local entrepreneurs - empty bottles could flow along the same lines of transport. William F. Johnson opened his bottling works in Socorro in 1880, and John Phillip Dieter opened the firm of Houck and Dieter, bottling sodas in El Paso a few weeks before the railroad actually reached the city in 1881. Like Johnson and Dieter, John Corbett was drawn by the lure of success in the bottling business, and he chose Socorro, then Deming, as his destinations. Deming proved to be a lifelong connection.

Corbett's Early Life

Little is known about Corbett's pre-New Mexico life. Born of Irish parents in 1847 in the state of New York,' "in his youth [he] was employed in the treasury department at Washington, where he became personally acquainted with President Abraham Lincoln, an acquaintance that provided material for much fond reminiscences on his part in later years."² The rest of his early life remains a mystery.

The Las Vegas Years

Corbett came to New Mexico Territory in 1878 or 1879 when he was about thirty-two.' Although we may never know the full reason why Corbett chose to move west, the social climate for the Irish along the East Coast was not good during the mid- to late nineteenth century. Signs proclaimed "We Don't Hire Irish," and Irish people were generally discriminated against. Because of this high level of prejudice, many Irish laborers could only find

construction work, building the eastern half of the transcontinental railroads to meet the tracks laid by Chinese laborers coming from the west. Corbett may have moved west to avoid discrimination.

Although accounts vary, he probably first settled in Las Vegas, New Mexico. While almost nothing is known of Corbett's life in the town, he may have begun his involvement with soda bottling there. Although a history of the Las Vegas bottling industry has yet to be written, there were at least two early bottlers in the town, and either of them could have been in business when Corbett lived there (ca. 1879-1881). Chris Wiegand (also associated with Scherer and Wiegand) was listed in the 1884 New Mexico Gazeteer as was the Las Vegas Brewery and Bottling Association. One of the proprietors of the brewery, Gustav A. Rothgeb, had also bottled under his own name, possibly earlier.⁴ Corbett could have learned the bottling trade at either establishment before moving to Socorro.

Although Corbett lived in both Las Vegas and Socorro, a search of the 1880 censuses failed to uncover his enumeration in either location.⁵ He may have been traveling during the month of June when the census was conducted, or he may have been en route between the two towns. If the latter is the case, he could easily have stopped off in either Santa Fe or Albuquerque, both of which lie between Las Vegas and Socorro. In any event, this writer could not find a John Corbett listed in New Mexico in the 1880 census.

The Socorro Years

Corbett's reason for choosing Socorro is probably complex, but at least part of the answer may be fairly obvious. Throughout most of its existence, Socorro had been a small, relatively unimportant town with a pre-Civil War population of about five hundred. By 1880 the population had risen to 1,272 because of the discovery of silver in the mountains. The coming of the railroad in August 1880 spurred even greater growth.⁶ The booming town offered an opportunity for entrepreneurs in many fields, not the least of which was soft drink bottling.

By moving to Deming Corbett set a pattern that would be followed by many other soft drink bottlers, including Alfred Katzenstein, a later Socorro bottler who moved to Las Cruces and established the first bottling plant in that community. The history of Southern New Mexico, El Paso, Texas, and Southern Arizona is replete with bottler expansions and relocations into other adjacent areas. The Southwestern Coca-Cola Bottling Company, for example, was an outgrowth of Lawrence Gardner's Empire Bottling Works in El Paso. Blocked from selling Coca-Cola in El Paso by Hope Smith's Magnolia

Figure 1 - Johnson
& Corbett - 1886
Bird's Eye View Map
of Socorro (Socorro
County Historical
Society)



Coca-Cola Bottling Company, Gardner opened a plant in Deming, and Southwestern spread to four locations in New Mexico and eight in Arizona. El Paso's first soda bottler, Houck and Dieter was itself an outgrowth of A. L. Houck and Company of Santa Fe.⁷

Corbett made good use of his time in Socorro "where he started a bottling establishment, which he continued for several years."⁸ In February 1881 Corbett and his new partner, William E Johnson,⁹ bought lots twelve and thirteen Browne and Watson's Addition of Socorro for \$225.00. The partners also took out a \$250 mortgage on the property between Corbett; Johnson and his wife, Fannie; and George G. Stiles. The partners promised that "four months after date" they would pay off the mortgage "with interest at 2½ percent a month from maturity until paid." They satisfied the debt just three months later on 9 May 1881.¹⁰

Johnson and Corbett advertised their company as "bottlers and manufacturers of Imperial Ginger Ale, Soda water, and other mineral water."¹¹ The plant was on Fourth Street near Manzanara Avenue, and Corbett's plant on Silver Avenue in Deming was listed in the advertisement as a branch of the Socorro company.¹² Browne and Watson's Addition is currently called the Stapleton Addition and covers the four blocks on either side of Manzanara Avenue between Fourth and Sixth Streets along with a partial block to the west of Sixth Street at Manzanara. Johnson and Corbett's plant was probably near the corner of Fourth and Manzanara. The 1886 Bird's Eye View Map of Socorro shows a blue-roofed building on Fourth Street just south of the intersection with Manzanara (Figure 1). This structure is likely the building, although it would have been empty in 1886 after its sale by John M. Bahney a year earlier. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1886 (Figure 2) also shows the building and describes it as "Dw'g" (dwelling).¹³

Johnson and Corbett used two variations of bottles, both

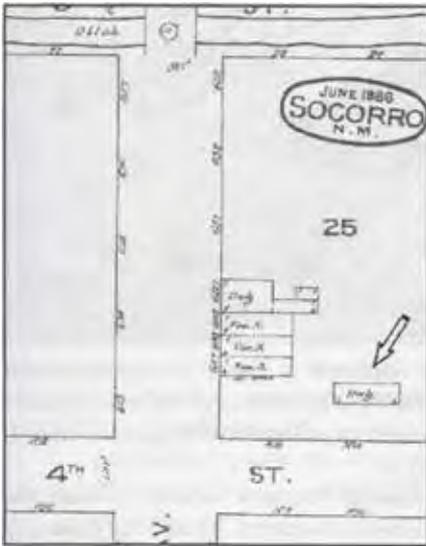


Figure 2 - Johnson & Corbett - Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1886



Figure 3 - Hutchinson-Stoppered Bottle from Johnson & Corbett (Lynn Loomis Collection)

with Hutchinson-style finishes.¹⁴ Both were marked JOHNSON & CORBETT/ SOCORRO/N. M. (Figure 3). Corbett's partner, also used a Hutchinson bottle prior to the partnership. His was embossed W. E J./SOCORRO/N. M. Both later owners of the business also used bottles with Hutchinson finishes. A bit of speculation as to why Corbett left Socorro in the middle of an economic boom is in order at this point. It appears that Johnson and Corbett enjoyed a virtual monopoly in the field of local drinks in 1881. Socorro is only sixty-seven miles from the much larger city of Albuquerque - not an especially long distance

even by horse-drawn wagon and especially not far when connected by the railroad. Drinks of all sorts could easily have been shipped from the larger city. In addition, a brewery was opened by William Hammel and Adam Emig in 1882, the same year Corbett left for Deming.¹⁵ An interesting note offered by the Hammel Museum is that "The [Hammel] brothers' first business was a bottling plant on Manzanares Avenue - the main street from the railroad depot to the plaza,"¹⁶ although this is probably a reference to the Johnson and Corbett plant. Although the brewery did not begin bottling soft drinks until 1908 (or a bit later), Corbett may have foreseen both the increased competition in the beverage industry and the eventual decline of the mines in the surrounding hills. It also is possible, however, that the partners were doing so well that they wanted to expand to include a larger market now that the railroad was approaching Deming. A final possibility is a disagreement between the two partners. Although there is no direct evidence of this, such dissent is fairly prevalent in similar cases. Corbett could have been

affected by both a “push” to leave Socorro and a “pull” to move to Deming for the potential, virgin market.

Johnson and Corbett continued in business (with Corbett operating the plant in Deming) until 21 March 1884, when they sold lots twelve and thirteen in Browne and Watson’s Addition” to E. M. Pitcher and R. M. Tweed for \$3,500.¹⁷ Johnson continued to live in Socorro for at least another year, although this writer has found no evidence of him in Socorro beyond that. Corbett remained in Deming.¹⁸

The Deming Years

The town of Deming came into being in 1880 with the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad at that point, although the Santa Fe did not complete its rails to join with the SP at the town until two years later. The settlement suddenly blossomed. Although the reason is uncertain, Corbett moved to Deming in 1881 and ran a business for many years.¹⁹ Soon after his arrival, he moved into a house at 122 South Iron Street.²⁰ After setting up a home

he took up Government land in the east edge of the town and at once built his soda-bottling works, establishing one of the leading industries of the place. He has since conducted this enterprise and has met with very gratifying success, finding a ready market for his products in this and surrounding towns and receiving a good income from their sale.²¹

Because Corbett’s Deming plant was originally a branch of Johnson and Corbett in Socorro initially he continued to bottle the same types of water he produced in Socorro (for example, Imperial Ginger Ale, soda water, and mineral water), although that may have changed as he relocated.²² Corbett’s bottling activities may have taken place at three different locations. His first plant may have been situated at the east end of Spruce Street.²³ By 1889 (or earlier), his plant may have been moved to a point just east of the Union Depot along the railroad right-of-way.²⁴ Corbett relocated to the rear of 304 South Silver Street in 1908 or 1909. This structure had served as the first customs house in Southern New Mexico. The property had been owned by the family of Corbett’s wife, and was in her possession at the time. There, with the help of Mike Garcia, he sold sodas, seltzer, Iron Brew, and Budweiser beer, while Corbett supplied the town with ice.²⁵

Corbett’s relationship with ice needs some discussion at this point.



Figure 4 - Hutchinson-Stoppered Bottle from William F. Johnson (Lynn Loomis Collection)

JOHN CORBETT,
MANUFACTURER OF
SODA WATER.
Dealer in Keg and Bottled Beer
— DEMING, NEW MEXICO —

Figure 5 - Corbett Ad (Deming Headlight 9/24/1897)

For the Blue-Jackets

Bevo
A BEVERAGE

Our boys in the Navy enjoy their Bevo. The Navy Department has you by official order of endorsement on this through its own trials, by allowing it to be used and served on all their vessels.

Adverse to others, you will find Bevo a palatable, refreshing and nutritious beverage.

Just the thing to take along for sail or cruise—easy to carry and for the health of those.

Bevo—the all-year-round soft drink

Bevo is sold in bottles only and is bottled exclusively by:

AMERICAN BEVERAGE CO., LIMITED
JOHN CORBETT
Wholesale Dealer DEMING, N. M.

Figure 6 - Corbett Ad for Bevo, a near-beer (undated ad, ca. 1916)

The 1894 Logan map shows an ice house that may have been Corbett's. To date, this writer has not found another ice business serving Deming except the Deming Ice and Electric Company, which probably did not actually sell ice before 1908. Corbett sold ice until at least 1906 as shown by receipts on file in the Deming-Luna County Mimbres Museum. His ads in the Deming Graphic continued to advertise ice until the final ad ran on 10 November 1911. The rival newspaper, the Headlight, however, contained his ads for beer and sodas but no ice (Figure 5). Until more evidence appears, we can probably date Corbett's ice business from the early 1890s until the end of 1911.²⁶

Corbett's obituary states that he "maintained his bottling business until recently"²⁷ although that may really refer to wholesaling shipped-in brands. However, this suggests that Corbett remained in the soda bottling trade in Deming for about thirty-five years, assuming a closing date of early 1918. After the cessation in 1911, he did not resume advertising until 1917 when he touted Bevo and Exelso,

two cereal beverages (near-beers) for sale to military personnel (Figures 6 and 7). The ads ran until just before his death in May 1918.²⁸

The timing of his near-beer ads was not coincidental. After Pancho Villa's daring raid on Columbus, New Mexico, on 9 March 1916, the Army opened Camp Cody in Deming. Because enlisted



Figure 7 - Corbett Ad for Exelso, a near-beer (undated ad, ca. 1917)

men were not allowed to drink intoxicants after 18 May 1917, a market was created for cereal beverages because they were intended to taste as much like the original brews as possible. The young men in uniform could be reminded of the taste, even if they could not receive the alcoholic content. Bevo, introduced by Anheuser Busch in 1916 and brewed until 1930, was the first of the near-beers that breweries would produce as a means to survive Prohibition.²⁹ Soon Exelso from the Hamm Exelso Company of Saint. Paul, Minnesota, joined in the competition along with other non-alcoholic beverages intended for the military trade and the growing likelihood of Prohibition. Although Bevo and Exelso were distributed by Corbett, Bone-Dry, another cereal beverage brewed by the Houston Ice and Brewing Company was also sold in Deming.³⁰ Camp Cody remained open until the end of World War I, when it became a tuberculosis sanatorium for former soldiers.

Although no information on Corbett's prices for sodas seems to have survived, one of the six receipts on file at the Luna County Historical Society disclosed prices for beer and Malt Nutrine (a non-alcoholic malted product distributed by Anheuser-Busch). Half a dozen bottles of Malt Nutrine wholesaled for \$1.25, and "5 doz. beer pts." sold for \$7.25. According to that figure, 12 pints of beer would sell for \$1.45 or \$2.90 per 24-bottle case. The receipts also indicated that Corbett sold "Famous St. Louis Lager Beer" and



Figure 8 - Hutchinson-Stoppered Bottle from John Corbett, Deming (Lynn Loomis Collection)

presumably other products from the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Association along with Milwaukee Lager Beer from the Val. Blatz Brewing Company. Unfortunately (from the viewpoint of a historical researcher), all but one of the receipts (dated 1901-1906) only show purchases of ice.

As in Socorro, the only bottles known to have been used by Corbett in Deming are Hutchinson-finished soda bottles. Although there are four minor variations in the bottles, all are embossed JOHN CORBETT/DEMING/N. M. (Figure 8). It seems strange that in thirty-four years of bottling in Deming, Corbett only used four types of bottles. Many companies in business for fewer than ten years had as much or greater variety. It may well be that Corbett often used generic bottles with paper labels. It is also possible that he only sold near-beers after about 1916. Most bottlers stopped using Hutchinson stoppers by at least 1903 in favor of the more-effective crown caps Corbett was involved in

other businesses as well. Along with N.A. Bolich, he opened Corbett and Bolich, "Dealers in Clothing, Hats, Caps, Boots, Shoes, Gents' Furnishing Goods, etc. etc." in 1885.³¹ The store faced Gold Street on Block 3 between Spruce and Pine. Interestingly, the store was located in the same block as the Deming Brewery, a competitor to Corbett's beer distribution. The clothing business was apparently short lived. By the 1890s, possibly earlier, he became involved with mining interests. Along with Frank Wyman, he formed the Deming Ore Sampling Works (sometimes known as Corbett and Wyman), invested in mining stock, opened a mine in the Victorio Mountains, twenty miles west of Deming, and bought into other mines in New Mexico and Chihuahua, Mexico.³² A description of the Deming Ore Sampling Works states that Corbett and Wymant assay ore from the adjoining mines, also purchase the ore and have it smelted. This has proved a very beneficial industry to the development of the mines in this locality. The miner can have his ore brought to this place and find out exactly what it contains, so that if the yield is sufficient he can continue his work, and if unprofitable abandon it.³³

The indefatigable Corbett became still more involved in the town. In 1898 Jacob S. Fassett and Lou H. Brown organized the Bank of

Deming with Brown as President of the Board of Directors and John Corbett as Vice President (Figure 9). Corbett ascended to the presidency upon Brown's death in 1908 and held that position until his own death a decade later. He served as mayor of Deming from 1 May 1911, to 1 May 1916 and was a member of the school board in the 1890s.³⁴

Corbett married Kate Field, a Deming resident, in 1888, but the couple had no children. Kate, also of Irish descent, was twenty-two (Corbett was forty-two) at the time of their marriage and had been born in Texas. Like her husband, she was literate, and her sister (with two children) lived with the Corbetts in 1910. The couple owned their home free of mortgage.³⁵ Corbett was a confirmed Democrat, "unswerving in his allegiance to the principles of the party, although by no means a partisan."³⁶ Corbett was also a Mason, a Past Master of his lodge, and achieved the degree of Knight Templar as well as being a member of the Mystic Shrine in Albuquerque.

Because of his character in business and in his personal life, Corbett was held in high esteem by his community. He was described as "an energetic business man . . . thoroughly reliable and trustworthy, and by the persistent pursuit of a noble purpose he has prospered until he has become one of Deming's influential men"³⁷ as well as being "a man of resourceful ability, carrying forward to successful completion whatever he undertakes."³⁸

Corbett had a history of illness that included notices in the newspapers twice in 1890. In July Frank Wyman, his partner in the assay business, had been "running the ice and beer wagon." The *Headlight* also left



Figure 9 - John Corbett in the Bank of Deming (Courtesy of Luna County Historical Society)

us with the cryptic comment that “Frank makes a pretty good ice and beer man - in a ‘qualified’ way.”³⁹ In September Corbett was sick again, and the *Headlight* said he was “rapidly regaining strength.” On Wednesday, however, there was much anxiety felt regarding him.⁴⁰ Beginning in 1916 he was frequently ill and he died at the age of seventy-one on 22 May 1918. His death “was due to a complication of diseases, in which Bright’s disease figured as a formidable factor.”⁴¹ At the time of his death, he still resided at the corner of Spruce and Iron. Corbett’s Funeral was the “largest in the history of the city, the house and lawn being filled with sorrowing friends come to pay their last tribute of respect to the departed.”⁴² His obituary stated:

He was always ready to take the lead in anything that promised to work for the betterment of the community, not only in the town, but in the entire state, and the services he rendered were not those of the purse only, but consisted of hard personal work. His benefactions to every charitable cause were many and generous, although the greater part of his charitable work was done quietly and unostentatiously, and few knew of the wide field he covered in this way.⁴³

With Corbett’s death the early era of soft drink bottling in Southern New Mexico ended.

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Endnotes

1. George B. Anderson, *History of New Mexico: Its Resources and People* (Los Angeles: Pacific States Publishing, 1907) and *An Illustrated History of New Mexico* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing, 1895) both give Corbett’s birth date as 4 April 1848 and his birthplace as New York City. His obituaries (*Deming Headlight*, 24 May 1918; *Deming Graphic*, 24 May 1918), however, claim the
- year to be 1847 and the place to be Wappinger’s Falls, New York. The *Graphic* obituary claims his age at death to be seventy-one, which would make his birth year 1847.
2. *Deming Graphic*, 24 May 1918.
3. *Illustrated History of New Mexico; History of New Mexico; Deming Headlight*, 24 May 1918; *Deming Graphic*,

24 May 1918. Once again the sources differ. *The History of New Mexico* places him first in Las Vegas. The 1895 version states, "He worked at his trade there and at Socorro, receiving \$5 per day. The new towns were building up rapidly and an expert workman could always secure something to do. "They fail to tell us, however, what his trade was. His obituaries place him only in Socorro. The obituaries also place his time of arrival in New Mexico at 1878.

4. For a look at early New Mexico Hutchinson-style soft drink and beer bottles, see *Zang Wood, New Mexico Blobs - Hutch's Mineral Waters* (Flora Vista, New Mexico: Privately printed, 1998).
5. A John W Corbet was listed in the 1880 census for East Las Vegas, hut it is not our John Corbett. This one was twenty-seven (therefore born in 1853), and his parents came from Tennessee.
6. Bruce Ashcroft, *The Territorial History of Socorro, New Mexico*, Southwestern Studies Series, 85 (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1988), 10-13.
7. See, for example, Bill Lockhart, "The Evolution of a Southwestern Non-Carbonated Beverage Container from El Paso, Texas, to Phoenix, Arizona," in *Archaeology of the Jornada Mogollon: Proceedings from the 12th Jornada Mogollon Conference*, edited by Sonia Padilla and Victor Gibbs, Geo-Marine, Inc., El Paso (2003), 79-90; Bill Lockhart, The Interrelationship Between Non-alcoholic Carbonated Beverage Bottlers in New Mexico, Arizona, and El Paso, Texas," paper presented at the 12th Mogollon Archaeology Conference, 11-12 October 2002, Las Cruces, New Mexico.
8. *Deming Headlight*, 24 May 1918.
9. It is unlikely that W. E. J., belonged to anyone other than William E. Johnson. Although this writer has been unable to find any record of Johnson prior to his involvement with Corbett, he almost certainly established a bottling business in Socorro in late 1880 or early 1881. He was listed in the 1880 Santa Fe census, so he could not have been in business in Socorro earlier than July 1880. Since bottles with his initials (W E J.) are known from Socorro, he must have been in business prior to his partnership with Corbett in 1881. The location of Johnson's business is also unknown, but he may have occupied the space that he and Corbett later purchased.
10. Deed Records, County of Socorro, New Mexico, Book 4:355, 382.
11. *Socorro Daily Sun*, 6 September 1883.
12. *Socorro Sunday Sun*, 14 January 1883; *Socorro Daily Sun* 5 December 1883. Unfortunately the only microfilm of this edition of the newspaper is almost illegible. The location may actually be Fifth Street or Sixth Street. The Fourth Street location is more likely since Pitcher and Tweed (Johnson and Corbett's successors) are listed on Fourth Street in 1884.
13. The building was missing from the next available Sanborn map (1893), and the street name west of the Plaza had been changed to Fischer. The street remained Fischer until at least 1913, although it is currently again called Manzanaras. Fourth Street, west of the plaza, also disappeared in 1893. The old Fourth Street is just within the right-of-way of Interstate 25.
14. The term "finish" refers to the top part of the bottle. In mouth-blown bottles, that was the part that was made last, hence the name, "finish," for the final process. Inversely, on machine-made bottles, the "finish" was the first step in the process.

Used primarily between 1880 and 1905, the Hutchinson-type stopper was popular because it could be resealed, the stopper remained in the bottle, and it could be stored in the upright (or any other) position. Although most bottlers had long switched to the crown cap,

Hutchinson's Patent Spring Stoppers were not discontinued until 1912. The stopper consisted of a rubber disk that fit tightly against the inside shoulder of the container, forming a leak-proof seal. The disk was secured in place by a spring (frequently in the form of a figure-8) which protruded from the lip at the top of the finish. The protruding spring was pushed into the bottle bore, depressing the disk to create an opening through which the contents of the container could be imbibed. The bottle could be re-closed by exerting an upward pull on the spring, to re-establish the seal. Although they were superior to other stoppers of the late nineteenth century. John R. Paul and Paul W Parmalee, *Soft Drink Bottling: A History with Special Reference to Illinois* (Springfield: Illinois State Museum Society, 1973), 12-13.

15. *Territorial History of Socorro*, 18.
16. Spencer Wilson and John DeWitt McKee, "Welcome to the Hammel Museum: A Short History and Guide to the Museum," undated pamphlet published by the Socorro County Historical Society.
17. Deed Records, County of Socorro, New Mexico, Book 11:658.
18. Pitcher and Tweed only owned the business for four months before selling to John M. Bahney. Bahney, too, was short-lived in the bottling business, closing the firm in 1885. The Hammel Brothers went on to found a successful brewery and bottled soft drinks on the side until the advent of Prohibition, when soda bottling became the main income for the brewery. Although the name, Illinois Brewing Co. remained in use, the surviving Hammel brother, Clarence, continued to bottle soft drinks until he sold the business in 1959. For a history of the Socorro soft drink bottling industry, see Bill Lockhart, *Fourth Street Near Manzanarez: The Carbonated Beverage Industry in Socorro, New Mexico, 1880 to 1967* (Socorro: Socorro County Historical Society (in press).
19. *Deming Graphic*, 24 May 1918; the *History of New Mexico* gives the date as 1882; the obituaries suggest an arrival in 1881.
20. Wood, *New Mexico Blobs*, pages unnumbered.
21. *Illustrated History of New Mexico*.
22. *Socorro Sunday Sun*, 14 January 1883; *Socorro Daily Sun*, 5 December 1883.
23. Wood, *New Mexico Blobs*.
24. Different sources are somewhat confusing. The 1895 history places his soda factory at "the east edge of the town," a contention supported by Wood (1998) suggesting a location at the east end of Spruce Street. An advertisement placed by Johnson and Corbett in the *Socorro Sunday Sun* (14 January 1883), places the Deming branch at "Silver Ave" "This is not in the east side of Deming, although the corner of Spruce and Silver now becomes a possibility. When the Sierra Madre and Pacific Railroad built its tracks in 1889, the tracks "were laid a little south of Corbett's soda factory" (*Deming Headlight*, 5 July 1889). The 1894 Samuel Logan Plat shows an "ice house" (where Diamond Street would extend into the railroad right-of-way) just north of the Union Pacific tracks immediately before the D. S. M. and P railroad tracks turn south to Mexico. This would, indeed, have entailed a move if the plant had been on Spruce and Silver as the intersection is south of the railroad tracks.
25. Wood, *New Mexico Blobs*.
26. Despite a statement in Wood, *New Mexico Blobs*, that ice was a part of the business after Corbett's move to the old customs house, it seems more likely that he stopped producing ice after the move (ice making takes a lot of space). This also makes it more likely that the relocation took place at the end of 1911. It is also possible that Corbett stopped any actual bottling at this time and only sold drinks (both sodas and beer) that were shipped into

- town by rail.
27. *Deming Headlight*, 24 May 1918.
 28. See, for example, *Deming Graphic*, 24 August and 21 September 1917.
 29. Bob Drummond, "Non-Alcoholic Brew: Blank Beer" *American Breweriana Journal* 112 (2001): 22-24.
 30. *Deming Graphic*, 10 August 1917.
 31. *Deming Tribune*, 28 June 1885.
 32. *History of New Mexico; Illustrated History of New Mexico; Deming Headlight* 24 May 1918; Wood, *New Mexico Blobs*; Business Directory Arizona and New Mexico of 1897; deeds and stock certificates at Luna County Historical Society.
 33. *Illustrated History of New Mexico*.
 34. *History of New Mexico; Illustrated History of New Mexico; Deming Headlight*, 24 May 1918; *Deming Graphic*, 24 May 1918; Wood, *New Mexico Blobs*; *New Mexico Business Directory 1913-14*.
 35. 13th US Census, 1910; *Deming Graphic*, 24 May 1918.
 36. *Illustrated History of New Mexico*.
 37. *Ibid.*
 38. *History of New Mexico*.
 39. *Deming Headlight*, 26 July 1890.
 40. *Deming Headlight*, 20 September 1890.
 41. *Deming Graphic*, 24 May 1918.
 42. *Deming Graphic*, 31 May 1918.
 43. *Deming Headlight*, 24 May 1918.

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David L. “Happy Jack” Jackson of Old White Oaks A Lesson in Do-It-Yourself Integration

Roberta Haldane

Beginnings

On 7 July 1897 a small, wiry black man stepped off the stagecoach in White Oaks, a dying gold-mining town about twelve miles northeast of present-day Carrizozo in Lincoln County.¹ A casual observer would have noticed nothing remarkable about this young man as he looked around, stretched, and brushed dust off his pant legs after the ninety-mile, bone-jarring trip from San Antonio near Socorro. He and other passengers had chartered a private stage rather than wait for the regular mail stage. They left the Rio Grande at sunup and arrived at the Ozanne Hotel in White Oaks early the next morning after changing horses four times on the way.

Dave Jackson (“Happy Jack” or just “Jack” to his friends) was the only African-American in White Oaks. He might have been more hesitant that July morning if he had realized that the White Oaks of 1897 was a town whose citizens were made up largely of Southern sympathizers-and it was only thirty-two years after the Civil War.

He probably knew nothing of the fate of the last black man to enter White Oaks. This man, also named Jackson (first name Richard), ventured into the town in 1882 and soon after was charged with being a horse thief. He was then taken by vigilantes from a cellar that passed for a jail and hanged from a tree within two hundred yards of the outskirts of the town.²

Born in Collins County, Texas, in 1870, Jack was the son of poor farmers who put him to work as soon as he could hold onto a plow handle. Schooling was sketchy, amounting to only about the equivalent of fourth grade.

By the time he reached White Oaks at the age of twenty-seven, Jack had been on his own for thirteen years. He was fresh from a year in El Paso working for Mr. Mendenthal, who ran a livery stable and wagon yard.³ Wages at the yard were \$1.50 a day, but after Mr. Mendenthal discovered his new young employee could unload and move a rail gondola load of crushed rock in a single day, Jack’s pay went up to \$2 a day. He had heard of a gold-mining town he wanted to see in a beautiful valley up north in New Mexico.

Getting Started

Standing on the street in White Oaks and looking the town over, Jack got down to his most urgent business: to find out if any jobs were to be had. Men had just finished timbering a new shaft at the Old Abe Mine, so day-labor work in the mines was not available. The Helen Rae mine at Nogal east of Carrizo Mountain needed men, though, and Morris Parker-son of prominent White Oaks mining man Erastus Parker-was superintendent. So Jack boarded

a stage for the short trip to the Helen Rae and found Parker, who gave him a job as shovel hand.⁴

That work didn't last long, and Morris returned to White Oaks, taking Jack with him to do housework for the Parkers. While waiting for a freighter to arrive and take him to try his luck in Arizona, Jack strolled down to the cyanide plant operated by another Parker son, James. James hired the young man on the spot. After a week in the cyanide plant, Parker raised Jack's pay fifty cents a day, which clinched it: he would make White Oaks his home. With time the townspeople saw to it that he served on the Lincoln County Election Board, never missing this service since first being appointed in 1898, until 1954.⁵

A Disciple of Bernarr MacFadden

Small and slight though he was, Jack was very strong. He came to be considered the town's strongest citizen at a time when White Oaks was a tough town. He would seize on the chance to perform feats of strength such as lifting up the biggest men in the community and holding them over his head. And he could move heavy mining equipment other men could scarcely budge.

The next step was to send off for correspondence courses on bodybuilding from Bernarr MacFadden, the guru of physical culture in the first half of the twentieth century.⁶ Jack worked ten hours in the mines by day, then came home and lifted barbells far into the night. "Never had a fight," he later claimed. Fellow townsmen got the message.

Meanwhile, Jack rented a little log cabin and stocked it with supplies. After working at the cyanide plant for a year, he sent for his sweetheart, Mary, then living in Galveston. She made the stage trip to White Oaks, and they were married in the fall of 1898.⁷ That fall and winter Jack spent at the Homestake Mine, then got a job at the Old Abe mill sorting ore. At that time the Old Abe shaft, at 1,450 feet, was one of the deepest "dry" shaft mines in the world.⁸

A year later he was put to firing the boiler and running the engine, and finally to amalgamating. Amalgamation is a process for extracting metals from pulverized ores by adding mercury to the ore pulp to form an alloy, or amalgam. The huge stamps that pulverize the ores make a deafening noise, and after years of working at this job Jack lost much of his hearing and had to wear a hearing aid. He also lost two fingers at the Old Abe mill when a steam pipe broke on one of the big boilers.⁹

The Wildcat Leasing Company

In 1904 the Old Abe closed down and most of the men went to Arizona looking for work. It was either "lease or leave." About this

time Jack and a local man he knew who later became his best friend, Allen Lane, got together to try for a lease on some of the White Oaks mines controlled by the Parkers. Jack, having known the Parker family for some years and been befriended by them, thought he could get the leases.

He went by train to El Paso where the Parkers were now living and doing business as Parker and Parker, Mining Engineers. In their office in the First National Bank building, negotiations went on for about two months. A trip to St. Louis also had to be made, but finally the lease came through.¹⁰

Now it was time to take in new partners. On 1 January 1905 George and Ed Queen (also long-time White Oaks mining men), Allen Lane, and Jack formed a partnership called the Wildcat Leasing Company. George pulled out in a few months and left for California, but the remaining three stayed for the long haul. Allen was the master mechanic (he later even built a working automobile entirely by hand from spare parts); Ed was in charge of mining operations; and Jack, besides being in charge of milling operations, was secretary-treasurer.

How could a man who was scarcely literate, could not type, and knew nothing about bookkeeping manage business affairs on this scale? More correspondence courses! On reading, writing, and how to keep books. Jack bought a typewriter and learned to type and for more than 25 years handled the business of the partnership remarkably well.¹¹

Their first year the partners leased the South Homestake mine and grossed \$18,000 (a significant sum in those days). Next they leased the North Homestake mine and mill so that they'd have an operating mill and hired a Crew to work it-as many as eighteen men at one time. Finally,



Wildcat Leasing Company moving the Vera Cruz equipment to White Oaks as part of the new power plant. Ed Queen is third from right, standing. Dave Jackson is second from right, standing. Collection of Donald Queen, Carrizozo, New Mexico.

the Wildcats bought both the North and South Homestakes. Jack estimated that the partners grossed more than \$300,000 from the gold and tungsten output of these mines.¹² To turn gold into cash the Wildcats poured the gold into bricks ready for the market and shipped it to Denver. The Denver Mint then sent the partners a check from the US Treasurer for the amount of the gold shipment.

The Wildcats had their share of troubles with the mines. Three of their employees, the Kelt brothers, at separate times all fell down shafts in the mines but none was killed. Jack, describing the third Kelt boy's accident, said Herman "fell 25 feet and it didn't hurt him much." Bill fell sixty-five feet, never even breaking a bone. Jules claimed the record fall, at 135 feet. As he afterward boasted: "I've got my brothers skint all to hell in falling."¹³

The first mill run was made in March 1905, and by 1913 the Wildcats had paid for their two mines and mill.¹⁴ The partners operated their mines off and on until 1930, when they sold out to a long-time White Oaks lawyer, A. H. Hudspeth.

The Alto Light & Power Company

The 250-kVA generator driven by a Corliss valve engine (part of the 750-kVA power plant used to operate the partners' mines and mill) came from the old Vera Cruz mine southeast of White Oaks. The Vera Cruz was no longer operating.¹⁵ To negotiate to buy the Vera Cruz generator and mining equipment, Jack traveled with a \$10,000 certified check in hand to Greenville, Michigan. He closed the deal after two weeks of haggling with the major stockholders.¹⁶ The partners disassembled the equipment of the



Construction crew stringing power lines for the first public power plant in Lincoln County. Collection of Donald Queen, Carrizozo, New Mexico.

old Vera Cruz power plant located on the railroad spur to Capitan and moved it to White Oaks in 1912. They situated the generator on the slopes of Carrizo Mountain two miles east of White Oaks. To fuel the plant, the Wildcats bought a coal mine on the same slope. At the time the power plant was installed, the Wildcats ran the mines only one shift a day. Having a lot of excess power at night, they decided to sell the surplus power and so ran lines first to White Oaks, then to Carrizozo and the Parson mine in Bonita Canyon near Nogal.¹⁷ By late 1912 the Wildcats had installed an electric plant at the coal mine, built several hundred miles of transmission lines, installed transformer stations, and obtained franchises to furnish electrical power to the towns of Carrizozo and White Oaks. Thus the first electric lights in Lincoln County came to White Oaks in 1912, and on to Carrizozo and Parsons in 1914. Jack used to say, "I found Carrizozo in darkness and left it in light."¹⁸

The Wildcats began to disintegrate in October 1931 with the death of Allen Lane. Then Ed Queen sold out and moved to Arizona. Of the original partners, only Jack was left in White Oaks. It was now that he came into his own as a beloved legend in his community. Honesty, hard work, and helpfulness had won him the lasting respect of all the White Oaks townspeople.

Good Samaritans

Jack and Mary never had children, but Jack—who adored children—originated White Oaks' first Boy Scout troop, taught Sunday School for years, and cut the hair of all the local youngsters.

The wife of his partner, Allen Lane, became very ill when their daughter Vivian was only a baby. Jack and Mary took the child in, called her "Baby Doll," and kept her until she was four or five. Later on the little girl would spend some of her vacations with her foster parents.¹⁹ Mary Lou Welch, who at one time lived in White Oaks' Hoyle mansion, says that Jack and Mary often babysat *her* two children when she was young so that she and her husband could go to the dances around Lincoln County.²⁰ Over the years Jack and Mary took to helping anyone who needed money, food, clothing, or nursing care. They prepared the dead for burial, and sometimes Jack made the caskets. Always he helped dig the graves and bury the dead. After the mines had long since closed and White Oaks had become a ghost town with only a few people left, Jack still went into the mines to oil the machinery and keep it in working condition against the days when, he was sure, the mines would reopen.

Mary Jackson

If someone took sick, Jack could soon be seen carrying a pot of Mary's delicious soup in an earthen jar with a lid and handle to take to the sufferer.



David Jackson strolling with Charlie Wayne Wetzel near Jack's Peak in the Jicarillas, 1962. Collection of Larue Lane Wetzel, White Oaks, New Mexico.

Mary was an excellent cook. Before she married Jack, Mary had been employed as a live-in nurse to two small children of a wealthy family in Galveston. During a terrible hurricane, the lower floor of the home flooded and she had to pass the children through a window to the second floor balcony, where she tied the children to a porch pillar. Then she signaled boats that were picking up flood survivors.²¹

Mary, a timid and reserved woman of much dignity, would visit people in White Oaks where she was sure of a welcome. Sometimes the couple would entertain guests. Mary had lovely silver, beautiful china, and linens. Mary Lou Welch

recalls that Mary would seat her dinner guests and serve them a wonderful meal, standing all the while and waiting on everyone.

There were a few ups and downs in the marriage. Jack's wife told historian Eve Ball, "He was always a good man except for one bad habit: he liked to play poker...He'd slip out at night and stay till almost morning... One night I found him gone, got the molasses jug, and poured sorghum on the window sill. Just before daylight I heard him washing his hands, but I never mentioned it to him."²²

Sometimes Jack liked a little nip or two as well. Once when Jack had a bit too much to drink, Mary was waiting for him at home. She had in her bedroom on a brass bed two "fancy" pillows, big squares filled with goose down in snow-white shams. Upset with her husband, she was leaning back on these pillows at the head of the bed holding Jack's shotgun and awaiting his return. When he finally did come home, somehow the gun went off, blowing up the pillows and raining down feathers all over the house. Jack wasn't hurt and quietly gathered up all the down in pillowcases while Mary sat there crying. In later years Mary became crippled with arthritis, but her faith and optimism never

wavered. A devout Christian, she read a lot and loved poetry. She died in 1954.²³

Guardian Angel of the Cedarvale Cemetery

Over the years Jack made it his personal mission to take care of his friends now residing in the Cedarvale cemetery outside White Oaks. He repaired fence, pulled weeds, and decorated before national holidays. Some of the graves he tended were those of William McDonald, New Mexico's first governor after it became a state; Andy Hudspeth, New Mexico Supreme Court Justice; wealthy old John Hewitt; and Susan McSween Barber, the Cattle Queen of New Mexico.



David Jackson. Source: Amarillo News-Globe, Amarillo, Texas. Photographer: Woodfin Camp. Permission of Dennis Spies, Editor, Amarillo News-Globe.

His Friends Were Legion

Jack lived on nine more years after Mary died, remaining strong and healthy most of the time. He often walked the twelve miles from White Oaks to Carrizozo and back to visit friends, throwing out of the road any rocks that could cause flat tires.²⁴ As winters began to feel colder, Jack traveled to El Paso to spend part of the cold months with Mrs. Rufus Cadenhead, his "Baby Doll" of earlier times. Jack's many friends in Lincoln County and elsewhere began to hold annual "Dave Jackson Day" celebrations in his honor in August at White Oaks. People would come from hundreds of miles around, spread picnic lunches under the oaks, and make a day of it. Later on, reunions would take place in the schoolhouse.

A stroke in 1963 ended the life of this beloved man noted for his benevolence, his wit, and his concern for humanity. At the funeral held in Carrizozo, the church was packed with friends from his sixty-six years in Lincoln County who had come to say goodbye to the man who had become a monument to all that was good in old White Oaks.

A tribute on the front page of the local newspaper spoke for all Jack's friends the day of his death:

Today, Dave Jackson, White Oaks pioneer...went to meet his maker. Time passed swiftly for Jack and even at the ripe old age of 93, he possessed youthful qualities that endeared him to all of those who fell within the circle of charm that was his...

He kept [the] faith, and countless are they who have sat spellbound as he told of those brighter days He came seeking riches and found them in the life that was

his, a life of fair play, honesty, and charity to all.

It wasn't whether he won or lost but how he played the game.

Adios, Jack.²⁵

Dave Jackson's life was a symbol of tolerance and respect between white men and African-American men. The world is a better place because he passed through.

Roberta Haldane is a retired technical writer from Sandia National Laboratory. She has a Master's degree in business. A frequent contributor to the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*, the author has an abiding interest in the history of Lincoln County, New Mexico.

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An Oral History Interview of Margaret (Margo) Favrot 19 July 2004

Conducted by Gordon Owen

My (Margaret Favrot's) ancestors came to the United States from Paris, France. They arrived first at Mobile, Alabama (with Lafayette) but soon settled in Louisiana. Early generations of the Favrots developed and managed sugar plantations plus being engaged in construction projects in the New Orleans area.

My uncle and aunt, Dr. and Mrs. Robert E McBride, of Louisiana, (Mrs. McBride was my mother's sister) came to Las Cruces in 1904 - one hundred years ago. Dr. McBride had heard that the Las Cruces area and climate were excellent for treating tuberculars, so he started a tubercular sanatorium. It was located on what now is Townsend Terrace. The home in which they lived is still occupied. It sat quite a ways back, but there was an orchard in front that came up to Alameda Boulevard, which was way out in the country at that time. Dr. McBride had heard that the desert Southwest's sunshine and dry air was the best for tuberculosis patients, and he had a number of tents pitched close to the sanatorium. Some of his patients lived in those tents and seemed to get along very well. In fact, I know of several instances of patients that came out here on stretchers, but their health improved very rapidly and they became very prominent citizens here in Las Cruces.

Dr. McBride's private practice became so involved that he did not have time to take care of the sanatorium as well, so he asked my folks to come from Louisiana out here. They came in 1905, and my father ran the sanatorium for a while. As to what happened to the sanatorium, my memory of that is blank. However, in 1907 my folks were living in El Paso, where I was born. (So that means I am looking forward to my ninety-eighth birthday next May). However, I spent much time with my aunt and uncle in Las Cruces. Although the folks - and I part of the time - lived in El Paso until about 1920, I spent more time living in Las Cruces with the McBrides.

Back to 1912, I can remember coming in from the Alameda, which was way up north, coming into town, to what became the Union Las Cruces High School but now is the county judicial building. That area was, before the school was built, a farm, either the Felipe or Jose Lucero farm. I believe it was Jose's farm, but I can remember it very well, long before the school building was built. Coming on into town, I can remember St. Genevieve's church. It had a picket fence all the way around the block, with the band stand in front, where they used to have concerts, and so forth. That was in 1912, and the church was facing Main Street, which now is the mall, and the Community



Margo Favrot, courtesy of the author.

First Bank is now on the northeast corner of the site.

Another thing that I remember, way back when, was the first post office, which was on Main Street and later was Newman Hardware. The building is still there. That was the first post office until the second was built on Griggs Street, and that now is the municipal court house.

Going on down Main Street, the old Shenks Bakery was on the corner of Las Cruces Avenue and Main Street. I can't remember when it wasn't there - for many many years. I didn't mention the Bowman Bank? On what was Main Street and Griggs,

was a two-story building, which was the Bowman Bank.

Mr. Bowman, who lived in Mesilla Park, was quite a prominent fellow, and was a president of the bank for years. I do recall that in 1935 Mr. Bowman and his son were killed in a plane crash. I guess the Bowman Bank and the First National Bank were in early days the only two banks in Las Cruces. My uncle (Dr. McBride) had his office upstairs in the First National Bank building. That building is still standing on Main Street. The Bowman Bank later became a restaurant run by an Italian. After that, Mr. Rouault bought it and made it into the Rouault Hotel. Later he sold it and it became the Herndon Hotel and it was the Herndon Hotel until the building was destroyed. As to the restaurant, I was still going to school when it was a restaurant. I can still see the proprietor and I used to know his name. Then he moved across the street next to John's News Stand and he had a restaurant there.

I don't know exactly when but there were two brothers, the Manasse brothers, who had a very large clothing store in the same block as the First National Bank, and they were in business a long, long time there. Going farther south on Main Street was the May Grocery. May Street was named for the May family. It was a large grocery store and I knew the niece of Mr. May, so we used to stop in there every day on our way to school, and he would give us a little piece of candy or something. Again, I mentioned I spent so much time living with the McBrides. By this time, the McBrides lived on North Main Street, and the doctor had his office on Main. We'd walk to school at Loretto

Academy, which was where the Loretto Towne Center or office complex is now located.

I graduated from Loretto grade school in 1923. For many years, Main Street was paved only as far as Lucero Avenue and the rest of it was just an old dirt road. Actually Main was paved from Las Cruces Avenue to Lohman, and I can remember the hitching posts all along the street. There were cars but still a lot of buggies and wagons on Main. Loretto School and Convent blocked the south end of Main Street so you had to turn west and go by the old mill to get to what is now El Paseo.

In 1927 I graduated from Las Cruces High. There were only sixty-eight of us in the class, and I only know of one other person of that class who is still living. I'm sure there are others - there may be - but only one person I know of. The last I heard, of her she was living down at La Mesa. Las Cruces High then was where the judicial complex is. I believe ours was the second class to graduate from there, but I wouldn't swear to that. The first graduating class had been in 1926.

I then went to work for the Extension Service at the college. El Paseo at that time was just an old dirt road. During summers we worked different office hours than other offices, so there was no bus service to the college. That meant I walked from Las Cruces to the college on that old dirt road to get to work on time. Sometimes someone who was going that way would pick me up, but there was not much traffic.

In 1923 I spent the summer up at Dripping Springs at the old abandoned hotel of Colonel [Eugene] Van Patten. We lived for a while in 1923 on Main Street in the Ascarate home. Nemascia Ascarate was a grand daughter of Colonel Van Patten. The house had a kind of gable roof to it but at the top there was a kind of flat area with a little railing around it. In the summer of 1923 and 1924, we would go up there in the evening because there was an open air theatre across the street. We would go up there and see the silent movies without having to pay anything. We were in the middle of the block. The Campbell Hotel was on one side of us, and a kind of machine shop on the other side. Now it is the location of Goodyear Tire Company. The old Tortugas Cafe was also just north from us.

Going back to my schooling, I went into my senior year at Loretto, but in the meantime, the Loretto College opened in El Paso. Many of their students came from Mexico and were boarders. Rather than coming back up to Las Cruces, they went to the Loretto school in El Paso. Therefore there were fewer pupils and teachers for the local high school. So my senior year I started at Loretto, but in October I had to transfer to Las Cruces High and

graduated from there.

As to my working career, I did stenographic work at the Extension Service on campus. In those days, that included shorthand and typing. I worked there for seven years. One memorable experience from the campus days came in August, 1935. The heavens let loose just east of Las Cruces, up near the mountains, and Las Cruces was flooded. The Main Street buildings with basements all were flooded. For example, John's News Stand had standing water. Across the street, the Twinning Variety Store had a basement, which was all flooded. We tried to get out to work at the college. We usually went past the little Episcopal church (St. James) at Mesilla Park but the bridge across the drainage ditch was washed out. We had to go down to Tortugas to get to the college. When we got to where the dairy barns used to be, there were just gullies. The road had been washed out. So we took off our shoes and socks and walked over to our building.

The Extension Service, for whom I was working, had their office in the basement of Foster Hall. We had just received our year's supply of envelopes. They came in flimsy boxes of five hundred each. The janitor had failed to shut the door to the closet. So thousands and thousands of envelopes were floating up and down the hall. The water was in the bottom drawer of my desk, so we could not work, naturally. So we came home, put on boots and started touring Las Cruces to see the damage. Up there by Alameda and Parker Road, where the old Isaacks home sat up high, you should have seen the trunks, the junk and good stuff that was up there on their lawn, because it was high ground. Alameda, where it still takes not much rain to cause damage, really took much damage. Houses fell, adobe houses collapsed, all along there. On Willoughby and Fleming and Alameda more houses collapsed. It was quite some sight. However, there were no fatalities. Another landmark which was affected was the overpass on Picacho near Broadway Courts, which had been there for many years.

For the rest of my working career, with Farmers Home Administration and later Soil Conservation Service, I was located in Las Cruces. I retired in 1969, so I have been retired for thirty-five years. I have lived in this house, which was built in 1907 (on Miranda) for seventy-two years. The old Amador home (built in 1905) is on the corner of this block and new owners are extensively renovating that house.

Thinking about those early years, the two Lucero brothers alternated as county sheriff and deputy for a number of years. There was limited crime, and the Luceros always "got their man."

I have been asked about my feelings about downtown renovation. Today

it is sad. I don't think it can be revived to what it once was. If they want to go ahead and do something with it, that is fine. But I don't think it can ever be what it once was. It never will come back. The mall is not a street any more. Traffic is entirely different than it was in the seventies. Cruces has grown immensely, and I think the traffic would be something terrible if Main Street were restored. I wish we could stop the growth. We already are entirely too big. I used to be able to go down the street and knew most everybody to speak to, but now I don't know anybody. It just is growing too fast. Going out to the college any more I get lost, because another building has gone up. We are just growing too fast.

I can't imagine they are spending as much money as the paper says on the Rio Grande Theater. That reminds me, in 1935 the Rio Grande Theater had Bank Night. Each week the fund went up and got up to \$200. Before Christmas, they began to award prizes in fifty-dollar increments. I won one of those fifty-dollar prizes. I went up to get the prize and just yelled out, "We'll go to the Rose Bowl," and to the Rose Bowl we went, with Mr. and Mrs. Quesenbury and their son. Although we had good seats, we stood most of the time because the game was so exciting. It was the best game I ever saw. Alabama beat Stanford 29 to 19.

Thinking of World War II, through my work in Farmers Home Administration and at the college, I was acquainted with several men who were sent to the Philippines. Several of our Farmers Home supervisors and college acquaintances were there, and a number of them were fatalities. Also related to the war, there were two prisoner of war camps in Las Cruces. One was on Melendres, for German prisoners, and one for Italians was on Lohman at what later became the Montgomery Ward site. They worked for several years in area farms. They used to pass by my house every morning, singing lustily as they went to work.

I have been asked about the disagreements we hear about the bed of the Rio Grande. The old Barker farm, south of Las Cruces, was close to the river, but they keep filling it up until you can't see the old river bed. For instance, in the areas near Burn Lake and near Bravo (formerly Wallace) Chevrolet, you once could clearly see the old bed, which once ran right through Las Cruces.

My family has had much to do with Las Cruces airports and flying. My sister's husband, Bob Crawford, was a pioneer. During WWII, he was teaching flying in Texas. Then he came to Las Cruces. He first had a small airport out on Highway 70 on the way to Organ. Then he had an airport on the south side of the NMSU campus, and some flying courses were offered. Then he had an

airport on Hadley near the Meerscheidt recreation center for several years and finally went to the present airport west of town and then retired.

One last memory - I remember well the fiesta Las Cruces had in 1949 to celebrate its 150th anniversary. It included a big parade with a lot of covered wagons and floats. The opening night performance at the college football stadium was struck by a dust storm and the resultant damage meant no show until the next night. A Viramontes girl was queen of the centennial.

Postscript: My given name is Margaret. About sixty-five years ago when my niece was born, they named her Margaret after me. However, she was always called Peggy, but relatives insisted she should be called Margo. The Margo stuck for me rather than her, and I've been called Margo by many folks ever since.

Gordon Owen is the author of two works of history of particular interest to the people of southern New Mexico, *The Two Alberts: Fountain and Fall* and *Las Cruces, New Mexico, 1849-1999: A Multicultural Crossroads*.

New Mexico's First *Mestizos* The Story of a Home Guard Soldier: Jose Carlos Coleman: His Tragic Life and Honorable Death

Rita Sanchez

After the U.S. takeover in 1848, southern New Mexico was a rugged frontier territory with only a few small towns, cattle ranches, and Mining settlements. Beside the old Spanish villages and Indian strongholds, it was also a land of cowboys and men who lived by their own laws.

With all of the clashes that took place between *Hispanos* and *Anglos* in various conflicts during this period - the Salt War, the Lincoln County War, the Rustlers War - at one moment in history, the two sides worked together in an effort to bring peace. While conflict was inevitable, all was not chaos. Many worked at becoming law-abiding citizens. Some *Hispanos* and *Anglos* alike actually worked side by side to build a new country out of a lawless frontier while serving in the New Mexico Home Guard. One of them was Jose Carlos Cruz Coleman.¹

Although outlaws such as John Kinney, Billy the Kid, and the "Young Guns," capture the imagination, did not rule the day. Some ordinary folk with extraordinary courage provide just as dramatic a story.

In the 1880s members of the New Mexico Home Guard proved their willingness to end injustice and restore order to a ravaged land. Some were New Mexico's first *mestizos*, the offspring of two different cultures who had once clashed in war but now worked together to bring peace.² Carlos Coleman's story reveals the contributions made by the Home Guard.

The New Mexico Home Guard was instituted in 1878 by Governor Lew Wallace in the aftermath of the Lincoln County War, a time when it was difficult to tell the lawless from the law abiding, and sometimes the outlaws of the day appeared to be the heroes.³ Like the Tombstone gunslingers from the same period, the Earps and the Clantons in the infamous shootout at the O.K. Corral, they might easily have killed one another off.

The Home Guard was something else. It was ready to answer the call in the face of unrest should trouble reemerge. Soon enough trouble came when townspeople began protesting their outrageous losses of cattle and other stock. Within two years after the establishment of the Home Guard, "the local policing of the area turned into a statewide manhunt for organized theft."⁴ Local farmers and ranchers were no longer able to protect their own herds, and so the Home Guard was called into action in 1881 on orders from the new governor, Lionel A. Sheldon.

Names like Colonel Albert J. Fountain and Captain Eugene Van Patten are well known for their daring and flair in southern New Mexico lore. Other lesser-known personages, who may not be as formidable, stand alongside them in courage and daring. In 1881 Fountain and Van Patten were allowed to handpick their officers from people they trusted. Among them were Carlos Coleman and his brother Ricardo (Rito) Coleman, who were appointed that year. Carlos was directly under Captain Van Patten in Company A of the Las Cruces Rifles. The son of Charles Henry Coleman, a founder of Las Cruces, and Macedonia Cruz of La Mesilla, Carlos soon became known to his community as First Lieutenant Charles Coleman, Jr., his father's namesake.

Carlos's story is significant in that there is very little written history on the Hispanic families of the Mesilla Valley during this crucial period, especially about those who gave their all from behind the scenes. Carlos also represents the first mestizos, that is, the people of mixed ancestry, the children of conflict. Evidence of that committed effort can be found in the local newspapers, the national archives, and in church records. They were born to United States soldiers in the war against Mexico who married the Mexican women of the land, many of whom lost their babies at birth, their children at young ages, or died in childbirth themselves. Carlos represents these mestizo families, some of whom died building a truly multicultural West.

The leaders of the Home Guard, Fountain and Van Patten, themselves maintained multicultural households. Fountain married Mariana Perez, the daughter of New Mexico Governor Albino Perez,⁵ and Van Patten married Benita Madrid Vargas.⁶ Fountain's son, Albert Fountain Jr., who also became a member of the Home Guard, once spoke out publicly and with pride for his multiethnic ancestry and his rights as a United States citizen.

Young Fountain, Carlos's peer, speaks as one of the first *mestizos* born in the United States to parents of Mexican and American ancestry. His voice provides a clear picture of *mestizo* concerns. In a letter to the *Rio Grande Republican*, he objects to the editor's reference to him as a "young Mexican." "Permit me to correct you," he responds. "My father is a native-born citizen. I was born in, and have never lived out of, the United States. This I think should be sufficient to make me an American."⁷

Fountain articulates for others what it means to be *mestizo*. He continues, "Do not understand from this that I am ashamed of my Mexican blood; on the contrary." He asserts that "as a descendant of don Albino Perez (who died at his post as Governor of New Mexico)" he is proud of his ancestry. He challenges the territorial press that "generally has fallen

into the same error, and speak of natives of this Territory as "Mexicans" . . . suggesting that "they have no rights which other American Citizens (born, perhaps, in Europe) are bound to respect." While some righteously insisted on maintaining their identity as Mexican citizens, these new Americans, the first U.S. citizens, fought together to maintain a peace that would not soon be realized.⁸

The story of Jose Carlos Coleman, although it has a tragic ending, exemplifies the human side of the culture clash between the U.S. and Mexico as a community attempting to build coexistence after the U.S.-Mexico war. His story also tells us something about frontier times and the fragility of life in the 1880s. It also shows how both sides had similar hopes for love, marriage, family, children, and a fulfilled life in the Mesilla Valley and were willing to put their lives on the line to achieve them.

Jose Carlos Cruz Coleman was one of seven children. His father, Charles Henry Coleman, was a German immigrant and soldier in the United States First Dragoons, and his mother, Macedonia Ledesma Cruz, was a New Mexican woman of faith and courage. Her family was one of the first settlers of La Mesilla, the Mexican town founded in 1849 by those from Doña Ana and surrounding areas who were fleeing the sudden takeover and overcrowded conditions of their lands.⁹

Padre Ramón Ortiz, the commissioner of immigration from Guadalupe del Paso del Norte, Mexico (now Ciudad Juarez) where Macedonia was born, was responsible for helping the people rebuild their homes in La Mesilla after the U.S. takeover of New Mexico. He was also the Catholic priest who baptized Jose's second son in the original San Albino Catholic Church in La Mesilla, Mexico, on 22 April 1854.¹⁰ Less than three months after Carlos was born, the United States took possession of that Mexican land too, and Mesilla citizens became U.S. subjects under the terms of the Gadsden Purchase. On 4 July 1854 the American flag was raised above La Mesilla where Carlos was born, and he, like many others, became citizens of the United States by virtue of this treaty between the U.S. and Mexico¹¹

Carlos seems to have grown up fast. Perhaps he had to, as his life was destined to be short. While still in his teens Carlos became a father. In 1867 a baptism record shows a child born to him and Maria Lopes, daughter of Nicolás Lopes and Antonia Ribas, a son named Jose Federico Coleman.¹² When Carlos became a father he was nearly a child himself. Because of the young parents' ages, the baby, Jose Federico was raised by his grandparents, Charles Henry and Macedonia. In 1870 Carlos was living at home with his parents, five brothers and sisters, and his three-year-old son Federico.¹³ Neither father

nor son could have realized how frontier conditions would one day result in their untimely deaths.

Carlos's personal life is significant in understanding the trials faced by even the most hardened settlers of the day. His mother died soon after this period, leaving behind six surviving children, including a newborn baby, Adolfo Emilio, while Carlos's two sisters, Lorenza and Emilia, were raised by the convent Sisters of Loretto. During the next ten years their father raised the older boys himself, as one by one, they left home. Carlos was a blacksmith's apprentice at age sixteen and a Home Guardsman at twenty-six.¹⁴

Carlos's search for love and family had painful results. In 1876, at age twenty-two, Carlos married Maria Abelina Sisneros, daughter of Anastasio Sisneros and Isabel Lobos, at St. Genevieve's Catholic Church in Las Cruces.¹⁵ In 1877 a daughter, María Refugia, was born, but the infant died and was buried only days later. Carlos was destined to suffer many more losses. In 1880 Carlos and Avelina had another baby, a son named Pablo. This time Carlos's wife died in childbirth. She was buried on 10 March 1880 at St. Genevieve's where she and Carlos had spoken their wedding vows.

Revisiting St. Genevieve's where Carlos's wife's funeral took place, must have been too great a reminder of the sad last ceremonial where she was buried only days before. Their son Pablo was baptized at the old mission church in Dona Ana. Four months later, however, he also died and was buried on 9 July at St. Genevieve's. Within a few short years Carlos had already experienced the loss of four loved ones, victims of the time when childbearing was life-threatening and so the life-expectancy for women and babies was short.

The second half of the 1880s appeared to be looking up for Carlos who remarried several months after Abelina died and soon became a commissioned officer in the New Mexico Militia. His new wife, Aurelia Valenzuela, daughter of Fernando Valenzuela and Joséfa Morales,¹⁶ gave birth to a daughter in 1882, naming her after Carlos's mother, Macedonia. A new people that represented two cultures, one from Spain and Mexico, the other from England, was beginning to emerge.

Carlos worked for his father who had begun to acquire much land and cattle. To deter any troubles with thefts, Governor Sheldon reorganized the militia. By 1882 cattle and sheep thefts from local ranches escalated to new heights. In that year, personal tragedy continued to stalk Carlos's family. Their daughter Macedonia died in June, within two months of her birth. The Home Guard, under Fountain and Van Patten, was soon granted special powers by Governor Sheldon to prevent what had become a chronic

problem with the convergence of the Texans on the New Mexican frontiers.¹⁷ Lieutenant Coleman had ridden on horseback along with other militiamen during this peak period of the early 1880s and he would now be in pursuit of cattle rustlers, including the most infamous among them, their leader, John Kinney.¹⁸

It seems that the whole Coleman family was involved in an all out effort to stop the cattle thieves. Carlos's brothers were certainly actively involved. His older brother, Ricardo, was a sergeant in the militia and even his younger brother, Patricio, at age nineteen, was described in newspaper accounts, as being actively in pursuit of the family cattle holdings. One wonders whether José Federico, Carlos's sixteen-year-old son, had also entered the fight.

By January 1883 no fewer than ten thousand head of cattle had been stolen from several areas between Socorro and the Mexican border. Dona Ana County had been the hardest hit. Cleaned out by rustlers, the people continued their appeal to the government for help "to follow thieves [and] to protect ourselves and our property."¹⁹

During this time, the Coleman family was dealt another blow. In January 1883 Carlos's son, José Federico, died after a fall from a horse.²⁰ This fatal accident happened in the midst of one of the many pursuits to capture the thieves, suggesting that José Federico's death may also have happened as a consequence. Then, on 10 March, Carlos's younger brother, Patricio, followed a trail from the Coleman ranch believing some cattle had been stolen. In the meantime, their father, Charles Henry, finding him missing from home, made a visit to the Van Patten camp to get help in locating him. Eventually Patricio returned home safely, but in a newspaper account, his father, responded to criticism levied against the militia by lauding the Home Guard for its efforts and quick action in helping him to locate the cattle and his missing son.

The public was often as critical of the Home Guard for not working fast enough, as they were when they moved too fast. This incident, which occurred shortly after the death and burial of Federico, shows how involved families were on a daily basis with retrieving cattle and personally pursuing the thieves. Having lost one son, the Coleman family did not want to lose another.²¹

Even after so many ill-fated events, more losses were in store for the Coleman family. Despite the personal tragedy of the death of a child, the loss of a wife in childbirth, and the death of his mother, the worst was yet to come in these troubling times.

More and more destruction left by the rustlers drove the citizens of

the area to appeal to public officials for drastic action against these cattle thieves. Carlos set out to face the most infamous of the rustlers, John Kinney and his gang. They had ravaged the land, stealing, branding, butchering, and selling stolen beef. Thieving had become rampant even with the use of cattle brands. While cattlemen registered their brands, and branded their cattle, these could be easily undone by changing a few curlicues to make a new brand. Charles H. Coleman's brand consisted of two Cs back to back with a line connecting them to constitute his middle initial, making it look like CHC. His brand would have been simple for thieves to alter.²²

Governor Sheldon's orders were to "capture such offenders at any cost."²³ By then Kinney and his gang of thirty or forty men were operating throughout southern New Mexico to the Mexican border. Several ranchers - Hispano and Anglo - were hard hit. The Mason ranch and home were sacked, the family held captive, and horses and cattle stolen. At the Chaves ranch thieves stole fifteen hundred sheep. One regiment of militia covered more than 250 miles in six days trying to capture these criminals.²⁴ At first Kinney's identity as the gang member was unknown. It must have been difficult for the community to distinguish between him as an upstanding citizen or a criminal. The Coleman family soon came to know both sides of Kinney intimately.

Before the identities of the rustlers were discovered, Carlos's company of Van Patten and his men was sent into homes and ranches in Rincon and beyond in an attempt to find out who the rustlers were. Kinney was soon identified as one of the ring leaders. He had first appeared in Las Cruces and Mesilla area in 1881 posing as "a rancher" and passing himself off as being on the right side of the law. On 16 April 1881, he was chosen as one of "a posse of five well-armed men . . . who had been sworn in as a Deputy Sheriff of Dona Ana County" to escort a "handcuffed, shackled, and chained" Billy the Kid to prison at the Lincoln County Courthouse.²⁵

Previously the Texas Rangers had actively recruited Kinney to put down any resistance in the Salt War. In 1878 Mexican protestors rallied against the injustices of their exclusion from using an old salt bed long considered community property. "Hired outlaws" like Kinney were recruited to assist Sheriff George Peppin in this effort to protect *Anglo* business interests.²⁶ El Paso residents were excluded from what was considered a lucrative measure, meant to end the use of free salt, in order to sell it back to the people.²⁷ Controversial on both sides, Fountain himself, whose wife's family used the salt, ultimately sympathized with the people who would lose their free access to this natural commodity.²⁸

In observing these and other actions of the Texas Rangers, the Home

Guard stands in stark contrast. While the Home Guard took pride in being law-abiding citizens, the Texas Rangers have been equated by some scholars with “the most systematic abuse of legal authority,” whose activities have been called “brutal repression of the Mexican population . . . tantamount to state sanctioned terrorism.” Indeed, “it has been estimated by historians that those murdered by the Rangers ran into the hundreds, even thousands.” To cite one example, in March 1881 Rangers crossed the border into Mexico and illegally arrested Onofrio Baca on a charge of murder, where he was handed over to a mob and “strung up to the cross beams of the gate in the court house yard until he was dead.”²⁹

Race came sharply into play when putting justice into action. The Rangers maintained sharp distinctions between the races, while the Home Guard did not. The Rangers often acted alongside vigilantes and independent agents who took the law into their own hands.³⁰ In simple terms, the Home Guard respected the law. To them, the bad guys appeared on both sides, whether Kinney or Sainz.³¹

The make up of the Home Guard was clearly multicultural. Members with names of Spanish and English origin speak to its make-up. Its commissioned officers consisted of Company A, Capt. Eugene Van Patten, First Lieutenant Carlos Coleman, and Second Lieutenant Pedro Pedregon; Company B, Col. Albert J. Fountain, Charles F. Bull, and Francisco Salazar.³² The Rangers, on the other hand, demonstrated a hatred of Mexicans, even into the twentieth century.³³

Such descriptions help illustrate the kind of law enforcement Kinney was involved with when he passed himself off as a law-abiding citizen. After his ventures with the Rangers, as a deputy, a hired gun for Peppin, and with his clouded identity, Kinney moved to La Mesilla.³⁴ It was around this time that Carlos's father, as a cattleman, met and, ironically, entered into business dealings with Kinney the imposter then posing as a rancher. Shortly after being sworn in as a deputy sheriff, Kinney signed an agreement with Carlos's father on 6 December 1881, filed in the Doña Ana Courthouse. In it John Kinney agreed to put fifty-four cattle into the care of Charles Henry Coleman who would return them with an increase of fifty-four more after a period of four years. “Straight goods,” or honestly acquired, the newspapers called them.³⁵ The Agreement document describes the cattle as, “two heifers, one bull, one dogie, thirteen steers, and twenty-six yearlings.”³⁶

A year later, on 4 September 1882, after learning of Kinney's infamous activities, Coleman modified his agreement with him, suggesting that if he found so much as one doggie (motherless calf) to be rustled, the deal was

off. In other words, an added condition altered the original agreement. It stipulated that “should any or all of said stock be stolen by cattle thieves then John Kinney shall be held responsible” for the thefts.”³⁷

By then, Kinney’s reputation had become known. He was wanted for the killing of Sheriff Isabel Barely in one county while he served as law enforcement for William Bonney in another. Bonney, or Billy the Kid, was one of John Tunstall’s and Alexander McSween’s allies in the Lincoln County war who sought to avenge the murder of Tunstall, his friend.³⁸ In reality, Kinney once ran with Billy the Kid and another notorious outlaw named Jesse Evans. After the Lincoln County War, Mrs. McSween, a survivor whose house and store were ultimately destroyed by fire, charged Kinney with arson, murder, and openly threatening to shoot her. He was indicted by a Grand Jury for arson, robbery, and murder.³⁹

The Coleman family was personally committed to Kinney’s capture as reflected in Carlos’s service in the Home Guard, its own losses to the rustlers, and also because of the contract Carlos’s father had entered into years before with Kinney before he violated the Coleman’s trust.⁴⁰ As a result, Carlos, that is, First Lieutenant Charles Jr, and his brother Sergeant Ricardo Coleman, as officers in Company A of the Home Guard, were only too willing to aid in his apprehension.⁴¹ This intense battle by these loyal citizen soldiers with the cattle thieves and other outlaws was part of a series of conflicts aptly called the “Rustler War.”⁴²

Although it is not possible to trace Carlos’s service as a guardsman precisely, the following chronology helps give an idea of their activities. Fountain initially ordered Van Patten and his men of Company A to scout for rustlers, while Company B, under Francisco Salazar went in pursuit of Kinney, even killing one of his gang. Fountain, in the meantime, escorted one of Kinney’s right-hand men, Doroteo Sainz, whom he later shot and killed during a daring escape attempt from the train that was transporting him to prison. On 7 March another company surrounded Kinney and some of his gang in Gila with thirty-six horses, mules, and cattle. After some resistance Kinney finally surrendered.

The pursuit of Kinney’s gang continued even after he and some members were captured. On 21 March Fountain and almost the entire battalion went to Kingston with warrants to arrest the Lake Valley branch of Kinney’s gang. Arriving in the night, more arrests were made and captives were warned that they would be shot if they attempted to escape. When a breakout ensued at dawn, two prisoners were shot. Two militiamen were then sent ahead to Lake Valley where three more arrests were made, one of

which ended in another shooting. Carlos Coleman surely saw plenty of this action.

The pursuers continued on to Hillsboro, arriving in Lake Valley on 24 March. The militiamen attempted further arrests, but the exhausted condition of horses and men alike stopped them. In Philip Rasch's graphic description, they were tired to the bone and they returned to Las Cruces.⁴³ In the midst of these troubled times, Carlos lost his own life.

After all these pursuits, Carlos was mortally wounded in the service of the New Mexico Home Guard. The exact circumstances of his death have yet to be discovered, but *The Lone Star* stated that he died on 29 March 1883 in Las Cruces at age twenty-nine.⁴⁴ The efforts of the Home Guard had resulted in the capture of John Kinney, "but the victory was costly for the Las Cruces Company" said one account, "because of the death of Lieutenant Charles Coleman"⁴⁵

José Carlos Cruz Coleman died young, having survived a series of horrendous personal losses, almost certainly because of his loyalty to the New Mexico Home Guard and his commitment to help rid the land of outlaws.

For his heroic efforts in the Home Guard, Col. Albert J. Fountain, the Commander of the Mesilla Guard, had "a full military burial with honors" for Lieutenant Coleman," with several people in the procession "After a ceremony befitting his service and rank, on 31 March 1883, Carlos was laid to rest in Saint Joseph Cemetery at Saint Genevieve's Catholic Church beside José Federico, the son of his youth."⁴⁶ That same day his father filed a document in the Doña Ana County courthouse removing himself from any connection to Kinney. The contract reads, "It is mutually agreed by and between both parties" that the original contract between Coleman and Kinney, dated 6 December 1881, "shall be delivered up and canceled."⁴⁷

In April 1883 the Home Guard celebrated its victory in having captured the cattle thieves. A photo in the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe shows the Home Guard and its surviving officers. It was taken one month after Carlos Coleman died and in it is Albert J. Fountain, Jr. Col. Fountain's son, who joined the Home Guard that same month.

Thousands of tourists pass by a glass case in the Governor's Palace to see the massive sterling silver tea tray awarded to Col. Albert J. Fountain for the work that he and his men achieved bringing these criminals to justice. The Gadsden Museum in Mesilla exhibits the remainder of this silver tea service and many more valuables, to remind viewers of the grandeur and passion of a historical moment that still lives in time.⁴⁸

The tragedy of Carlos Coleman continued even after he died. Two months later, in May 1883, his wife Aurelia gave birth to Joséfa, a hope for new life after his death. But, sadly, this baby girl lived for only three months. Thus, it appeared that Carlos left no descendants to carry on his family name. John Kinney, on the other hand, it is said, “managed to escape the usual punishment meted out to outlaws of his stripe.”⁴⁹ He died in obscurity at age seventy-five of Bright’s disease.

Carlos Coleman’s life appears to be steeped in tragedy, yet he leaves behind this rich story to remind us of the terrible price our ancestors had to pay during their courageous efforts to maintain their land and their identity in the Mesilla Valley. On 31 March 1883, the day Carlos was buried, the Doha Ana Stockman’s Association was established.⁵⁰ The association formed hoping to control cattle theft, but for many of his family’s descendants, it stands in Carlos’s honor. In the end, his brother, Sergeant Ricardo Coleman and Albina Maldonado, named their own son Carlos after his brother, thus continuing a long line of Carlos or Charles Colemans.⁵¹

José Carlos Cruz Coleman of La Mesilla had known love, fatherhood, and adventure, if only for a brief time. He contributed to southern New Mexico’s multiethnic legacy of Las Cruces and La Mesilla at a crucial time when the first *mestizos*, the union of Mexicans and Americans, fought hand in hand to maintain a land without outlaws.

Rita Sanchez is the author of *Cochise Remembers Our Great-grandfather Charles Henry Coleman: A Primary Document in Southwest History* and a previous contributor to the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*.

Endnotes

1. Much credit goes to Mary Ruiz Cardenas of Albuquerque for her more than ten years of research on the Coleman family. Mary uncovered Carlos Coleman’s father, Charles H. Coleman, as a U.S. First Dragoon in Stephen Watts Kearney’s “Army of the West,” called so by President Polk. He was sent to Santa Fe and then Dona Ana with Company H in the U.S. Mexico War; was a first founder of Las Cruces; and worked for the Butterfield Stage as a blacksmith. Mary has generously shared this extensive documentation and valuable knowledge about this forefather, our common ancestor and great-grandfather, and his children, the people of the Mesilla Valley, and Las Cruces.
2. The Spanish term *mestizo*, originally referred to the mixture of Spanish and Indian blood, while *coyote* was the correct term to indicate Spanish and Anglo or other European blood. However, these racial definitions were outlawed in Mexico in 1821 after its independence from Spain. Today the term *mestizo* has come into common usage simply to mean mixed blood or ancestry, no longer using taxonomy to characterize people in hierarchies. See Martha Menchaca, *Reconstructing History, Reconstructing Race: the Indian, Black and White Roots of Mexican Americans* (Austin: University of Texas, 2001).
3. As new governor, Lew Wallace, had the task of sorting out the reasons for the Lincoln County War and examining the

extent of its fallout. He then countered with Southern New Mexico's militia, the New Mexico Home Guard. See Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexico History II*, (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch Press 1912), 425.

4. *Ibid.*, The Militia, conceived after the Lincoln County War in 1778, was first organized and then passed under a law by Gov. Lew Wallace in 1880. In 1881 the new governor, Lionel A. Sheldon, escalated its efforts after public outcry over several cattle thefts.
5. Mariana Perez, was the daughter of Albino Perez, who was appointed governor in 1835. Perez was unpopular in New Mexico because he was considered an outsider; a plot to dispose of him was organized. The people rose up due to a debt-collection problem which resulted in a revolt in July 1837. The Governor's forces were defeated and Perez and his associates were captured and murdered. Warren Beck *New Mexico A History of Four Centuries* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1962), 121-23.
6. Linda G. Harris, *Las Cruces Cruces An Illustrated History* (Las Cruces: Arroyo, 1993), 56.
7. *The Rio Grande Republican*, 4 March 1882.
8. Richard Griswold del Castillo, *The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1990), in Chapter three, a valid choice offered to the Mexican people after the US Mexico War in the Treaty.
9. Gordon Owen, *Las Cruces New Mexico, 1848-1999: Multicultural Crossroads* (Las Cruces: Red Sky publishing, 1999), 29.
10. Jose Carlos Cruz Coleman (Charles Jr.) was baptized on 22 April 1854 in Mesilla at San Albino Church by Mexico's Commissioner of Immigration, Padre Ramón Ortiz, noted for helping to relocate more than sixty New Mexico families from the crowded conditions created by the U.S. military occupation in Dona Ana. Ultimately half the population of Dona Ana joined them to make a new home on Mexican land they called La Mesilla. See Samuel Sisneros, "El Paseño: Padre Ramón Ortiz," *Password*, 44 Fall 1999); Jean Brader, *The Mesilla Valley: A Short History* (Albuquerque: Rosetta, 1982),15; and Mary Daniels Taylor with major contributions by Nona Barrick, *A Place as Wild as the West Ever Was: Mesilla, New Mexico, 1848-1872* (Las Cruces: New Mexico State Museum, 2004).
11. Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *The History of the Military Occupation of the Territory of New Mexico* (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 102.
12. Jose Federico was named after Carlos's younger brother, Federico I, who died in 1860 at age two. Federico, II was the son of Jose Carlos Coleman and Maria C. Lopes, baptized on 4 January 1867. He died on 31 January 1883, after a fall from a horse, according to family history; Carlos died two months later; both are buried at St. Genevieve's Catholic Cemetery.
13. See the 1860 and 1870 New Mexico Territorial Census records for Las Cruces. They show Jose Carlos, age six and then sixteen, with his parents and other siblings. The 1870 census shows Jose Federico at three, listed with Charles Henry Coleman and Macedonia Cruz along with Carlos, sixteen, apprentice blacksmith.
14. Thanks also to Mary Sanchez for research leads and editing suggestions. Rita and Mary Sanchez are sisters, cousins of Mary Ruiz Cardenas, and great-granddaughters of Charles Henry Coleman and Macedonia Cruz. Their grandmother, Emilia Coleman, born 2 October 1862, was Carlos Coleman's sister His brother, Mary Cardenas' grandfather, was Patricio Coleman, born 17 March 1864; Other siblings, Jose Rito, born 20 May 1852; Elena, born in 1856; Jose Federico, born in 1858 died in 1860; and Adolfo Emilio, born in 1869, are listed in the family Bible once owned

- by Macedonia Acuña Sanchez, Emilia's daughter, who passed it on to her eleven children, Leo, Josephine, Christopher, Emiliano, Theresa, Mary, Rita, Joseph, Angelica, Severn, and Emily.
15. This marriage on 23 November 1876, and the baptism and two burials following, were all at St. Genevieve's Catholic Church, Las Cruces.
 16. Second marriage on 22 November 1880, baptism and burial of their baby all at St. Genevieve's.
 17. SNMRA, AGO, No. 14. See also Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexico History* (Albuquerque: Horn & Wallace, 1963), 2:490. Sheldon, a former New York attorney and Brigadier General in the U.S. Civil War became New Mexico governor 4 June 1881, and thereafter devoted much attention to the New Mexico Militia, the Home Guard.
 18. Philip Rasch, "The Rustler War," *New Mexico Historical Review*, 39 (October 1964), 257.
 19. *Ibid.*, 260.
 20. The story that Carlos's brother Frederick died after a fall from a horse was passed down to Patsy Coleman Roddis from her father, Patrick Coleman, son of Patricio Coleman and Vicenta Aragon.
 21. On 19 January 1883, Jose Federico was buried at St Genevieve's Catholic Church. The church record does not document the nature of his death, nor does it disclose that he was the son of Carlos Coleman. And while the death certificate lists Charles H. Coleman and Macedonia Cruz as the parents, the *birth record* shows Carlos as the true father.
 22. Cattle Brand Book B. Doña Ana County Courthouse. See also Contract Agreement between Coleman and Kinney, Dona Ana County Courthouse 1881.
 23. Rasch, "Rustler War," 258.
 24. *Ibid.*, 262.
 25. Paxton P. Price, "John Kinney, 'King of the Rustlers,'" *Pioneers of the Mesilla Valley, 1823-1912*, (Las Cruces: Yucca Tree, 1995), 211.
 26. *Ibid.*, 210.
 27. C.L. Sonnichsen, *The El Paso Salt War* (El Paso, Texas: C. Hertzog), 1961.
 28. Fountain was enlisted by Samuel A. Maverick of San Antonio, Texas to survey salt deposits on the southern side of the Guadalupe Mountains. He, at first, supported the idea of claiming the salt beds and charging the locals for using them. Then realizing the importance of the salt to the people who had shared it for generations to preserve and season their food, he reconsidered his position. The others, however, he could not convince of his view, and as a result, Hispanic outcry and resistance resulted in "the Salt War." See "Albert J. Fountain Achievements Eclipsed by his Early Death." *Borderlands: El Paso Community College History Project website*.
 29. William D. Carrigan, "The lynching of persons of Mexican Origin or Descent in the United States, 1848 to 1928," *Carnegie Mellon College of Humanities and Social Sciences Journal of Social History*; 36:2 (Winter 2003), 21.
 30. Race and class have also been used in the United States to categorize persons for purposes of establishing racial superiority in order to legitimate attacking one group or community. Several Race Relations Acts have been provided for racial equality. Racial terms became illegal since the United States Civil Rights act of 1964 and the Race Relations Act of 1965.nationalarchives.gov.
 31. Arnoldo de Leon, "In Pursuit of a Brown West," in Clyde A. Milner II, Ed. *A New Significance: Re-Envisioning the History of the American West* (New York and Oxford, 1966), 9. See also other Chicano authors, Amerigo Paredes, *With A Pistol In His Hand, A Border Ballad And Its Hero* (1958), Austin: University of Texas, 1998; other authors: Julian Samora, Joe Bernal, and Albert Pena, *Gunpowder Justice, A Reassessment of the*

- Texas Rangers* (Southbend, University of Notre Dame, 1979); also tackled the growing myth of the Rangers during the U.S. Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s.
32. "Our Militia," *Rio Grande Republican*, Las Cruces, N.Mex., 25 February 1882.
 33. Carrigan, 22. Scholars document the terrorizing of Mexicans well into the twentieth century. For example, on 18 October 1915, when Mexican outlaws derailed a train traveling towards Brownsville, killing several passengers, the Rangers exacted brutal revenge. They shot two Mexican passengers without knowledge of their participation and then executed eight suspected Mexican criminals along the banks of the Rio Grande. For a differing view, see Walter Prescott Webb, *The Texas Rangers: A Century of frontier Defense*. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1935, celebrating the Anglo triumph over Indians and Mexicans; republished in Austin: University of Texas, 1965.
 34. Robert M. Utley in *Lone Star Justice: The First Century of the Texas Rangers*, Oxford. New York: Oxford University, 2002, revises Prescott's view of the Rangers as unadulterated heroes of the Texas frontier. Utley's portrayal is one of nuance and shading, assuring that the Rangers were not always the good guys.
 35. *The Lone Star*, 28 March 1883.
 36. Contract Agreement between Carlos's father and Kinney, 6 December 1881, Dona Ana County Courthouse, Las Cruces, New Mexico.
 37. Contract Agreement modified, Charles H. Coleman and John Kinney, 4 September 1882, Dona Ana County Courthouse, Las Cruces, New Mexico.
 38. Beck, 167. Tunstall and McSween were partners in a rival business daring to challenge old-garde merchants, Murphy Dolan, and Riley whose ventures had become a monopoly in the town. When Billy-the-Kid's friend, Tunstall, was murdered and unavenged by the law, the retaliation on both sides led to the Lincoln County War in 1878.
 39. Price, *Pioneers of the Mesilla Valley*, 208.
 40. Coleman's agreement to raise fifty-four cattle to be returned to Kinney in 1885 with an increase to 108, is considered null and void should the stock be stolen by cattle thieves.
 41. SNMRA, AGO, No. 14.
 42. Rasch, "Rustler War," 260.
 43. *Ibid.*, 265.
 44. "Locals." *The Lone Star*, El Paso, 28 March 1883.
 45. Craig Nielsen, *Comunidad: Community Life in a Southwest Town, Las Cruces, New Mexico 1880-1890*, unpublished Masters Thesis (New Mexico State University, 1988), 213.
 46. *The Rio Grande Republican*, 7 April 1883.
 47. This agreement is formally canceled, the cattle returned to Kinney upon his capture, signed and recorded in a legal document at the Dona Ana County Courthouse on the same day that Carlos Coleman is buried, 31 March 1883. See original contract, n #36.
 48. Mary Alexander narrates the history of her ancestor, Col. Albert J. Fountain, in tours at the Gadsden Museum in Mesilla, New Mexico.
 49. Price, *Pioneers of the Mesilla Valley*, 207.
 50. *Rio Grande Republican*, 7 April 1883.
 51. Baptism, Carlos Coleman, son of Ricardo Coleman and Albina Maldonado, 20 January 1890, St. Genevieve's Catholic Church.

In Memoriam

Betty White Bowen

Betty White Bowen was one of the founders of the Doña Ana County Historical society. She was born in Philadelphia on 8 July 1910, the eldest child of Florence and William Wesley White. At fourteen, Betty received Girl Scouting's highest award for saving a drowning man. In 1929 she graduated from Lower Marion High School where she lettered in track. She attended Women's College at the University of Delaware and then worked for Macy's in New York City. Betty completed graduate studies at New York University. She modeled in Paris and New York during the late 1920s and early 1930s.

Betty married Andrew Armstrong in 1933 and had four daughters. Betty and Andy lived in New York City and Stamford, Connecticut. In 1939 they built a Frank Lloyd Wright home in Indiana. Betty and Andy built a second home in Las Cruces in 1954. Betty and Andy divorced after twenty-five years of marriage, and Betty moved her family to Las Cruces in 1958.

Betty was owner of the Mesilla Book Center, one of the finest bookstores in the Southwest. She was the first woman on the Board of Directors of the Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce and was appointed to serve on the commission for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of New Mexico statehood.

In 1963 Betty married Jack Bowen. She and her husband spent half of the year in San Carlos, Mexico, and half in the Gila Wilderness. Jack died there in 1980. Betty, who devoted countless hours to volunteer service in hospitals across the country, was known for her sense of humor, generous spirit, and love of the Southwest.

Betty Bowen died in her sleep, following a lengthy illness, at Desert Willows in the Northrise Retirement Village on 6 September 2004. Her ashes were taken to her beloved Gila Wilderness.

Rick Hendricks

Alice Peden

Alice Peden was born in Los Angeles, California, nurtured by an artistic mother, a published botanist father, and two literary professional aunts. She was awarded a BA in Fine Arts from the University of California, Berkley. Working in her favorite medium, watercolor, Alice had many one person exhibitions and participated in a number of regional and national shows. She once noted that "Watercolor can quickly capture

the essence of a scene and I like the immediacy of the process. Space, light, mountain and desert forms, I love all that New Mexico and the surrounding states have to offer me, and that is a great deal! Mountains have a special fascination for me and I have enjoyed painting all ninety-five ranges in New Mexico, each time exploring different aspects and times of day. Art is truly a way of life, and I love the challenges and rewards associated with it.” Alice painted colorful, meaningful and spontaneous landscapes of the region, designed greeting cards, and was working on the illustrations for a book at the time of her death.



Alice Peden

She was an active member of the Branigan Cultural Center Foundation Board as well as, several art societies, including the Santa Fe Society of Artists and the New Mexico Watercolor Society. Alice was not in our community for very long, however she certainly made an impression. We will feel her presence for some time to come. She was a very determined, talented, and gracious lady. After being here just a short time, Alice decided to “Push to Renew” the Downtown Mall. She campaigned diligently all over town, with anyone she thought could further the project, focused on the idea that Las Cruces should and could preserve and also, renew its heritage.

Many organizations, including the Branigan Cultural Center Foundation, received her support and guidance on many projects. The Doña Ana Arts Council, Downtown Las Cruces, and the Doña Ana Historical Society all benefited from her expertise. She helped design the Memorial Sculpture Garden for the Museums. Las Cruces was fortunate to have had her as a friend and patron. Alice Peden died in November of 2003.

Sharon Bode-Hempton

Book Reviews

A *Portal to Paradise* by Alden Hayes. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001. \$19.95, paper.

In his own words, this book “isn’t meant to be a piece of scholarship, but it isn’t fiction either. I didn’t make it up, and it is as accurate as I could make it” (xviii). Rather than dry scholarly text and annotation, this is a classic Western narrative, the story of the love of a man for his place in the sun—the Chiricahua Mountains of southeastern Arizona. Alden, who died in 1998, was best known as a National Park Service archaeologist with a distinguished bibliography of highly regarded works of exacting scholarship. Readers only familiar with his scholarly production may well be surprised at his light, self-deprecating touch. His humor also shines through and can be noted in the clever title he chose for this work, *Portal and Paradise* being two towns in the Chiricahuas.

Above all, Alden is a storyteller in the finest sense of the word. The tale he sets out is chronological and sweeps broadly from the arrival of the first humans in the area “11,537 years [ago] more or less on the northeast slope of the Chiricahua Mountains” (from the title page) until Alden’s arrival with his wife, Gretchen, in Cave Creek Canyon, located between Portal and Paradise, Arizona in the early 1940s. Along the way, he introduces the reader to many of the fascinating characters who lived in or passed through the Chiricahua Mountains over the years.

The lighthearted touch is a bit of a ruse, however, because Alden’s narrative is securely grounded in solid scholarship. One of the high points of this volume is the outstanding bibliographic essay. This carefully selected and annotated list of books is the perfect jumping-off place for a further exploration of the land Alden held so dear.

Rick Hendricks

New Mexico State University

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C *Child of the Fighting Tenth: On the Frontier with the Buffalo Soldiers* by Forrestine C. Hooker. Edited by Steve Wilson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. \$25.00, hardcover.

Child of the Fighting Tenth: On the Frontier with the Buffalo Soldiers is an entertaining memoir. Forrestine “Birdie” Cooper Hooker, who grew up in frontier posts throughout Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, and

Arizona, recounts her childhood and teenage years on the military frontier. Her memoirs stand out from other works in that genre, in as much as they are written in a lively and talkative manner. Indeed, prior to undertaking the writing of her memoirs, Hooker gained experience in writing and publishing juvenile novels covering life on the Western frontier and telling stories about ponies and dogs.

Her own story, which was unfinished at the time of her death in 1932 and subsequently completed and edited by Steve Wilson, covers her father's career as a military officer during the second half of the nineteenth century in the Southwest. It tells of a child's life in a military family in the West, from patrols to protecting water holes, to fighting Indians.

The military aspects and events in this memoir are placed prominently in the foreground partly because of the editor's interest in military - especially black military - affairs. Missing from Hooker's tales, however, are stories about the Buffalo Soldiers, though the catchy title of the book makes them expected. Despite having spent almost an entire childhood among them, very few, if any, references are made about the Buffalo Soldiers. Instead, among all the men and women she met - famous, high ranking military officers and their spouses; famous, high ranking Native Americans; and lesser known figures (all of whom are tied into nicely woven anecdotes) - the most outstanding were the Indians. More than any other individuals or group, she was fond of them and grieved about their plight during the 1870s and 1880s, as native people were increasingly forced to live on reservations.

In addition to the military aspects on the frontier, Hooker vividly describes the social life among military families. From childish plays to housekeeping chores and official functions to social interaction among Indians and Whites, her memoir aptly captures life on the military frontier. In fact, the social aspects of life as a child out West probably outweigh the more commonly known military aspects of this book. These memoirs are, as is so often the case in nineteenth-century childhood stories, full of anecdotal stories of a happy childhood despite the frequent absence of her father, the repeated uprooting to new posts, the occasional burdensome long travels to and from Philadelphia (the author's hometown), and the simple and often crude housing conditions on the frontier. The added benefit of adult experience and hindsight gave Ms. Hooker the opportunity to provide some critical social commentary about the quality of Indian agents, Indian-White relations, and gender-specific chores of Indian women.

In the end, *Child of the Fighting Tenth* is a well-written and pleasant memoir for the general audience. The brief biographical introduction,

bibliography, and list of historic sites add to the general knowledge of the period.

Tomas Jaehn, Curator
Angelico Chavez History Library
Santa Fe, New Mexico

S*pain in the Southwest: A Narrative History of Colonial New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California.* By John L. Kessell. ISBN: 0-8061-3407-0, hard cover, 100 b&w illustrations, 10 maps. May 2002. \$45.00.

John Kessell does what he does as well or better than any historian of the Southwest. Other historians or ethnohistorians such as David Weber, Marc Simmons, and Thomas Sheridan, who share the front rank of Southwest historians with Kessell, do it differently, but not necessarily better. Kessell knows how to make history come alive perhaps better than any other historian. He tells a compelling story he hopes will interest a new generation of world-be historians.

The story Kessell tells covers a vast canvass over time and space, treating more than three hundred years of history of the Spanish colonies in today's New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California from Columbus in 1492 to Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821. Kessell eschews excessive theorizing and jargon and lets the historical figures tell the story. They range from individuals on the top such as Columbus, Cortés, and Oñate to those on the bottom like Doña Ines, a Tano-speaking Pueblo woman taken from New Mexico by Castaño de Sosa and brought back by Oñate. Kessell is particularly interested in lesser-known individuals such as Anton de Alaminos, the pilot on Ponce de Leon's 1521 voyage to Florida. Through the stories of these individuals he weaves together the vast panorama of Spain's colonization of the Southwest. Extensive annotation provides a doorway to more specifics and more background.

Occasionally, his reading of events is debatable. In 1992, Kessell lectured, soon after a foot of the equestrian statue of Juan de Oñate at the Oñate Center at Alcalde was cut off, on the events at Acoma in 1598. He argued that the terrible punishment imposed on Acoma males over age twenty-four, of having one foot cut off and serving twenty years as a slave for rebelling against Spanish authority, was probably never carried out. His argument, which is repeated in this book, is that no subsequent mention is found in the documents of a one-footed Acoma slave, and that one of the Franciscan priests probably asked for and was granted a commutation of the sentence.

The records of the trial of the Acoma defendants make no mention of a petition for commutation of the sentence; rather they report explicitly that the sentence was carried out and that the Indians whose hands and feet were to be cut off were punished on different days. At his trial, Oñate was found guilty of using excessive force in putting down the Acoma rebellion. In his appeals Oñate never denied the mutilation of the Acoma prisoners. Before accepting Kessell's interpretation, there should be more debate and analysis lest a new myth arise that does not respect the Native American point of view or the documentary evidence.

Thomas Sheridan criticized Kessell for lack of analysis and the theoretical approach of such scholars as Cynthia Radding, Susan Deeds, and Robert Jackson. This is unfair because Kessell is not an anthropologist, ethnographer, or archeologist. He works with historical documents in a masterful way, reading between the lines, looking for the human story that reveals the actors in this grand pageant as human beings—Indians or Spaniards—to whom we can relate because of their failings and accomplishments. Kessell should not be criticized for being himself, a leading borderland's historian with a solid body of scholarship to his credit.

I learned a great deal from this book and intend to keep exploring this fascinating terrain with John Kessell and the larger-than-life players he brings onto the stage to play out the drama of the history of the Southwest.

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M*exican-Origin People in the United States: A Topical History* by Oscar J. Martinez. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001. \$18.95, paper.

As the title suggests, this book provides insight into the history and experience of Mexican-origin people who live within the United States. The book is highly informative and would be a good compliment to a Chicano/Mexican Studies class and also, well suited for those interested in a historical perspective of Mexican immigration and integration in the United States. The book is concisely written, nicely organized, with enough detail to keep the reader interested in the subject matter.

The author covers the social history of Mexican-Americans post 1848 within the southern United States. The book is divided into very readable chapters - each highlighting a different subject area, thus allowing the reader

to gain a complete understanding of the topic before continuing on. The chapters cover all aspects of society that immigrants encounter: education, occupations, oppression, racism, integration, and politics.

The book describes the struggles, challenges, and occasional successes of those who migrated to the United States. One chapter is dedicated to successful business people in the Tucson area. Many of these people became successful entrepreneurs, all the more so in recent years. A chapter also discusses politicians from the local level to the highest national offices.

Martinez tackles the Southwest state by state, an aspect of analysis that shows the differences and the similarities within the United States borders. It provides thoughtful analysis on some subjects by state; e.g., portraying New Mexico as unique because of its strong link with the Spanish Colonial period, unlike other states in the Southwest.

Although this book is not a biography, the reader senses that the author has first hand and family experience with many of the topics covered. Personal insights within the book lead to a clearer understanding of the struggle experienced by the Mexican-origin people in the United States. For non-Mexican-origin people, this book would help them to understand the stereotypes, reasons for current day and historical immigration to the United States and the major milestones that this minority group has reached.

The book includes a small number of charts, illustrations and data tables, however, the insightful text is, by far, the more valuable and helpful resource. It is a must read for historians and students of social history of the Southwest.

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F*fluid Arguments: Five Centuries of Western Water Conflict* edited by Char Miller. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001, xxix - 354 pp. 20 maps, charts, tables, notes, index, cloth, \$45.00.

As drought conditions ravage much of the West, competition for water resources has increased throughout the region. Each day seems to bring greater demand for limited supplies from agricultural, industrial, domestic, and recreational users. Despite recent publicity, however, struggles to control western waters are not new, but have a long history, as this book ably demonstrates. A collection of sixteen essays contributed by scholars from various disciplines, *Fluid Arguments* considers a wide range of water

issues and discusses ways in which former policies relate to environmental conditions we face today. The essays were first presented during a conference sponsored by the American Society for Environmental History held at Trinity University in 1998. After lengthy discussions at the meeting, the participants revised their papers for publication in this anthology.

Following an introduction by editor Char Miller, the book begins with three chapters devoted to settlement of the borderlands region of Mexico and the United States during the Spanish colonial period. Jesus de la Teja explains how new arrivals in the Tamaulipas Cession adapted to a semiarid environment, where grass was plentiful and water was scarce, by developing an economy based on livestock production. In contrast, Shelly Dudley describes an extensive agricultural enterprise established during the same era by Pima Indians, who regularly diverted irrigation water from the Gila River in present-day Arizona. Sandra Mathews-Lamb concludes this section with an analysis of a lawsuit now pending in federal court in which interpretation of Spanish colonial documents is crucial to determining water rights in New Mexico's Chama Valley.

The second section deals with problems faced by Native Americans in securing needed water supplies following their confinement on reservations in the nineteenth century. According to Bonnie Lynn-Sherow, reservation life caused the Kiowa people to recognize water as a positive force in their cosmology, when the tribe became more dependent on agriculture. Donald J. Pisani examines the federal government's allotment policy under which Native Americans lost much of their lands. Indians were supposed to become farmers, but Whites retained control of the water resources necessary for successful production. In many areas, water was allocated under state laws by the doctrine of prior appropriation, which frequently resulted in rulings unfavorable to Native Americans, as Alan S. Newell argues in an insightful chapter. The situation was complicated, however, by a decision affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1908, known as the Winters doctrine that required federal authorities to secure adequate water resources for Indian reservations. Daniel McCool provides a careful study of Winters and suggests that it may be used to promote tribal claims to land and water in the future.

Entitled "Agricultural Conundrums," the book's next section investigates issues relating to water use in ranching and farming. In a creative essay, James E. Sherow studies environmental changes on the Central Plains caused by the enormous herds of cattle that ate and drank their way up the historic Chisholm Trail en route to Kansas. Subsequently, stockmen gave way to sodbusters, who learned to conform with ecological conditions in Kansas. Thomas C. Schafer has found that early settlers began planting wheat in place of corn because of the region's limited rainfall. After about 1950, however,

technology provided new options with the advent of center-pivot irrigation systems depending on groundwater pumped from the Ogallala aquifer. Such innovations required capital, a scarce commodity in the West, as Brad Raley observes in an article dealing with irrigation development at Grand Junction, Colorado. Eastern businessmen invested in the original infrastructure, but they lost their shirts when expenses spiraled out of control, and the project reverted to local control. Widely regarded as promoting economic growth, irrigation projects sometimes cause significant environmental damage. After lengthy research concerning water quality in the lower Rio Grande Valley, geographer John F. Tiefenbacher has found that indiscriminate use of pesticides and fertilizers in conjunction with intensive irrigated farming has resulted in air and water pollution levels that threaten the health of the local population.

Not surprisingly, *Fluid Arguments* includes chapters devoted to western dam construction. During the dark days of the Depression and the Cold War, many Americans viewed the colossal structures erected to tame the Colorado, the Columbia, and other rivers as monuments to the nation's technological expertise, according to Mark Harvey. In a well-crafted essay, he shows how grandiose public works projects later fell from favor because of their enormous cost, but big dams might also bring grievous injury to the environment as well. Raul Sanchez provides a classic example in his article concerning construction of El Cuchillo Dam in the Mexican state of Nuevo Leon during the 1980s. Built to store water from the Rio San Juan for the benefit of industries at Monterrey, the project destroyed the livelihood of farmers and fishermen downstream once the floodgates closed. The social costs were so high that Sanchez recommends a human rights investigation by an international agency.

To complete the hook, Hal K. Rothman offers some predictions concerning allocation of western water in the new century. In his view, low-cost water for agriculture is clearly a relic of the past. Before long, supply and demand will redirect water resources toward the needs of the new service economy emerging in western cities. In short, alfalfa will give way to microchips. During the transition, Rothman foresees increased diversion for tourism, a business that uses water much more efficiently than ranching or farming.

The essays collected here are well-researched and gracefully written, but the topics are so diffuse that general readers may feel the lack of a common theme. Scholars interested in specific subjects may find the book more valuable. With that caveat, *Fluid Arguments* is recommended as a useful addition to the rapidly growing body of literature concerning water in the West.

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