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## Interview no. 81

Leigh W. Osborn

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO  
INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Leigh White Osborn  
INTERVIEWER: Jo Ann Hovious  
PROJECT: El Paso History  
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BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Member of old El Paso family

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Early El Paso, including Chinese population, education, social customs, and leading families.

1 hour 18 pages. Also included is an 11-page manuscript on Mrs. Osborn's life.

Leigh White Osborn  
by Jo Ann Hovious  
April 3, 1973

H: Let's start by telling me a little bit about when you were born. Were you born here in El Paso?

O: I was born in Tucson, Arizona. My brother, Owen, was born in El Paso. He was older than I. He was born where Lerner's Store is now, in a little adobe house. My father was a third generation graduate from the University of Maryland, and he came West and met my mother in Colorado. They were refugees after the Civil War from Virginia.

H: So they fled the conditions in the South.

O: They were married in Colorado and then he came here. My older brother, Alward, was born in Colorado. My mother came by stage and joined my father here. But I suppose it was hard for a doctor to make a living by just practicing medicine. They were probably paid with a dozen eggs. So, he was appointed Collector of Customs for a certain district. They went to Tucson, Arizona, and I was born there in Tucson.

H: In what year, Mrs. Osborn?

O: 1884. I'll be 89 on the 19th of November. I would be all right if I didn't have this disease. My mind is just about perfect. Both my mother and father were very highly and beautifully educated in Latin and Greek and literature and poetry. Well, have you ever read any of Owen's books? Did you ever read the Frontier Miner? It's a lovely little book.

H: Did your mother go to college?

O: Yes. She graduated from William and Mary College. And my father graduated from the University of Maryland. He was born on the eastern shore of Maryland. They moved here and the first home that I can remember was on Myrtle Avenue, on the corner of Myrtle and Ochoa. That's where I was raised.

H: About how old were you when you moved here?

O: I imagine I was about two years old because they lived in Silver City for a little while. And I'll tell you, a good woman and a little girl were absolutely safe. We had a great deal of culture. There were so many fine people who brought it with them. The Shakespearian Society and the...

H: Do you think they ignored, to an extent, what was going on in the other part of town? Do you feel it had much of an influence on your life?

O: No. At one time we had the battle of the red roses and the white, the better people were fighting the evil parts of the city. But I can't tell you much about that. I don't have that clear in my mind.

The Moreheads lived right across from us on Myrtle and so did Judge and Mrs. Dean. They had no children and we were just as much at home with the Dean family. Mr. Dean was a great admirer of Napoleon and of Mark Twain. So Alward, Owen and I just sat at his feet and listened to him read Mark Twain or the Life of Napoleon. After I grew to be a young lady--we were young ladies then, not teenagers--we had such beautiful clothes and lovely parties. The young men wore white kid gloves to the dance and we always went in a hack. Jack Hubbard, who lived on the same block with us, he taught poetry and English at the University of Texas for many years. He was President of Denton College. He's still living. He lives in a home near Austin. He was a fine young man. The A. P. Coles, the U. S. Stewarts, and the Zack Whites all lived on that block.

H: Were there lots of parties within that block?

O: Yes, and we had the most beautiful parties in those little homes. People would send to California and get boxes of smilax and decorate their houses. We wore such pretty clothes. No pants.

H: Definitely not. Then they really managed to ignore the desert outside.

- O: Yes, I think we did. As Owen said, "My mother and father almost conversed in poetry," because they were both readers and they loved it. They had a different kind of education from what you all are getting at the college. I have some pictures here of Old El Paso. Whether they'll do you any good or not, I don't know. I don't know where the canal ran uptown, but when it got to our neighborhood, it was between Olive and San Antonio Street.
- H: Did you use the water from it to irrigate?
- O: Yes, I think we did. I think we drank Deming water, which we bought in big bottles.
- H: Do you remember when they filled in the ditches that ran through town?
- O: No.
- H: I always wondered why they stopped using them.
- O: I don't know and I don't know under who's administration it was done. I don't remember the different mayors as they came along because I lived away from here for a good many years after I was married. I was married in Salt Lake City and I lived in Idaho.
- H: Where did you go to grade school then?
- O: I went to grade school at Central School. That's where my two brothers graduated. After my father died, the boys both came home. Owen was studying law at the University of Maryland, and my older brother, Alward, was studying mining engineering at Golden, Colorado. When my father died, my mother wanted Alward to be a physician, too. So, we went back to Baltimore and I went to school there. We stayed for four or five years. I had a great many relatives there, too. But I don't think it's the history of my family that you want.
- H: Your father started practicing medicine again after he had been Collector

of Customs? Is that when you moved back to El Paso?

- O: Yes, but he was practicing medicine at the same time. I have a copy of his appointment from the Secretary of State to Collector of Customs. At that time, Arizona was still a territory. I have letters that my mother wrote, saying what a terrible little place it was. You can imagine a young woman coming from Virginia and going there. She had two little boys then. She said that most of the people you met on the street were either Indians or Chinese. There was a big Chinese population there. I think they were building the railroad from the west. My mother said that one day they were having a big street celebration and she took the boys by the hands. They were having all kinds of contests and there was a band and everything. Alward, the older of the two, disappeared and she was running frantically through the crowd looking for him. All of a sudden, the bands began to play and the crowd screamed and hollered. There was Alward at the top of the greased pole, waving his dollar bill. That was just before I was born. Then we went to Silver City and I don't know how long we stayed there. Has anyone ever written about the large Chinese population that we had here?
- H: Yes. In fact there was a thesis written just about two years ago on the Chinese in El Paso.
- O: Oh, we had the most wonderful Chinese population. Our laundries were all Chinese. And you know how they'd sprinkle the clothes? The Chinamen would... they kept a big vessel of water with a dipper, with a cup. They'd fill their mouths full of water and then they'd blow the water out on the clothes and then they'd iron. Yes. Then the clothes were delivered. They were regular, old-fashioned Chinese. They wore Chinese clothing and had long queues. And all our restaurants were Chinese. The more well-to-do people

all had Chinese help. We depended entirely on their integrity. They were very, very honest.

H: Do you think that most of the people were nice toward them and felt kindly towards them?

O: Yes.

H: The newspapers were kind of intolerant of them. Maybe this was just journalism or their way of handling it. But I wondered about that because I noticed the newspapers in the 1880s would talk about the Chinese and complain about the opium dens. Do you remember being worried about opium smoking or being afraid of the Chinese?

O: No. In El Paso? No indeed. We had three of the loveliest Chinese stores. They carried the most beautiful Chinese goods that you ever saw. We'd buy all of our firecrackers there. And when they would have a funeral, they would throw out little slits about the size of a dollar bill that were perforated with holes. The devil had to pass through a hole of every one of those slit before he could get the soul of the person who had passed away. They took food and left it on the graves. On the day of the Chinese New Year, they would have a big parade. They would have a long dragon made of paper. It was a wonderful life that we lived. The people were different. Their word was their bond. In this day and age when the doctor won't go and see an old woman. If my father was around, he wouldn't have treated a dog like the doctors treat you today. That's what I would like to write up. I have a newspaper copy of an article that was written when my father died. It's called The Beloved Physician. I have it in manuscript form.

H: He must have been a wonderful man. Did he work awfully hard?

O: Why, of course. I remember when the telephones were first put in. My father

kept his horse at Longwell's Transfer and the telephone number was number one.

H: Well, then, they must have had the first phone. Do you think they may have /done/ them that way? The first one got the first number?

O: I imagine that they did, because my aunt's telephone number was 132. I don't know what our telephone number was, but when my father got a call, he would never refuse to see a person. Of course, they paid their doctors less.

H: Yes, I'm sure they did. Did he feel badly about the lack of care that the poor Mexican-American population particularly received? There were many deaths because they didn't receive care and they didn't understand the illnesses? Did he ever talk about how sad it was?

O: That I don't know. But he worked Sundays and he didn't have Saturday afternoons off, or Thursdays off. He worked 24 hours a day because the telephone was always answered. He would get up in the middle of the night and go see a patient if he was ill. Of course, all the doctors did that.

H: Yes, I'm sure. But they did have a lot of patients then.

O: Now, Jack Hubbard tells in his book, talks about Miss Kate More Brown, who was our music teacher in the early days. Everybody loved her and called her Miss Katy. Miss Mary Gates was the drawing teacher and she afterwards married Mr. Morehead.

H: I didn't know that.

O: She was his second wife. They lived on Myrtle and then they moved further down on Myrtle Avenue to a different house.

H: Was she quite a bit younger than he was? I gathered that she was younger. What was Mr. Morehead like? Do you remember anything interesting about him at all?

O: I have a vague idea of what he looked like. I think we were always on the



wrong side of the fence. My father was the physician of Mr. Bronson and Mr. Austin, who also were bankers here in El Paso. We were very intimate friends. And the Camps, the Fewells, Captain Bell, and Captain Charlie Davis. That was our...

H: Do you think there was somewhat of a division between the groups then?

O: I think there was and I think that is when there was the battle of the red roses and the white. Mr. Morehead was in favor of allowing...I hate to say this because I might be wrong, but I don't think he was in favor of abolishing all of the...

H: Prostitution and gambling and what not. Well, that's been my impression, too. He just allowed it to exist.

O: I think it brought lots of revenue into the city. I think that that is when we had the battle of the red roses and the white.

H: I've never heard that named before.

O: Well, we had it. There's nobody you can ask, because I don't know of a living soul as old as I am.

H: Can you remember some of Mr. Morehead's friends?

O: I really don't know. The State National Bank is almost like kinfolks with me. But it was through Charlie Bassett and George Flory, not through Mr. Morehead.

H: Do you think that he wasn't too well-liked by many of the people, that he was a kind of controversial figure?

O: Yes, I think so. I was quite a little child when the Moreheads were living there. But Charlie Bassett and I were of the same generation.

H: Did you know him when you were growing up?

O: Yes. I knew Charlie and George Flory, too. During the Depression I worked

at the Public Library. One time when the bank failed, the State didn't, there was a whispering campaign going on in the Library that the bank was going to close its doors that day. So when I had my noon hour off, I went down to see Charlie and told him what was being said. Afterwards, I got a letter from the lawyers who thanked me for what I had told them. They also put a public notice on the door saying that the bank would stay open. I think that's the only bank in town that stayed open during the Depression. Of course, I was a grown woman then.

H: When did you graduate from high school?

O: I didn't graduate. My brothers graduated in '96, went off to school, but came home at my father's death. I didn't graduate from high school because we went back to Baltimore. I went to school in Baltimore for about four years.

H: Do you remember your grade school days at Central School? You mentioned some of the teachers.

O: Yes, I remember when I was in the second grade. On Friday afternoons parents were invited and we would either have a spelling bee or the children would say a speech or something. I was to speak one time. I don't remember who my teacher was. In the third grade I think Miss Hunter was my teacher. Miss Lois Stevenson was one of the early teachers. She married Dr. Wilkinson, who was an eye, ear, nose and throat specialist.

H: Were the teachers quite strict? Did the children behave?

O: Yes, they were quite strict. Mr. Putnam was the principal and Mr. Roach was a teacher in high school. I went to high school here but I didn't graduate. There was a Miss Perry that taught my brothers. I can remember how the boys used to laugh when Mr. Putnam would come in to give an oral examination. Miss Perry would stand in back of him and write the answers

on the blackboard so her pupils could show off well.

H: Did the boys have any sports that they participated in in school?

O: No, nothing was organized at school. We had two tin buckets with a dipper. That's how we got out drinking water at recess time. I guess we didn't have any more germs then than they do now. Probably less.

H: What type of things did you do at recess?

O: The boys and girls were separated.

H: What did you do about eating lunch?

O: Usually go home.

H: Did you study, more or less, the standard subjects?

O: Yes. We all had to take Latin. This was in high school. We took algebra and beautiful literature. We had the loveliest courses in reading and poetry and things like that. Now, the other day a girl phoned me and said that she was a senior at UTEP and was taking a survey of cats and dogs. What good that girl is going to get out of that is... That's the difference in education.

H: Did you have science of any kind?

O: Would that be chemistry?

H: Yes, chemistry or biology--something like that.

O: I don't think so. We studied physiology, and also geography and grammar. When I was in Baltimore, I studied etymology, which is the derivation of words. I think that is a great thing. I don't think they teach it anymore. My mother used to be great at it. I would go through the dictionary and try to find a word that she couldn't tell me where the derivation came from. At Christmas and gift days, we all had books. That was what we wanted.

H: Is that how you spent a good deal of your time at home, reading in the

evening.

O: Yes, reading. Oh, I just loved to read. Of course, we didn't have television or radio or anything of that kind of entertainment.

H: It's being neglected now for television. Reading is something people don't do as much of anymore.

O: Yes. My boy is a chemical engineer and he's smart. But I always tell him that he's the one man that's never read a book. He wants a problem to work or something. He just came back from England. He was sent to England to talk to the University of Surrey on the desalinization of water.

H: Do you remember the Hagues?

O: Yes, I do.

H: You know James Hague's daughter still lives here in El Paso. Her name is Mrs. Hill now.

O: They were one of the first families.

H: Were they friends of your family?

O: Yes, they were. I think they were foreign. There was Lillian... Now let me see, they didn't live in our neighborhood. They lived down near the Union Depot.

H: Do you think that because they lived down there, you didn't see them as much as you could have?

O: None were my age. My brothers may have gone with Jim but I think he was younger than all of them. It seems to me that he came up and worked for my husband after we were married up in Idaho. I believe so, but I'm not sure. He would be about as old as I am, I guess. But they were very bright people.

H: James, the father, was a lawyer involved in politics. I wonder if you

heard anything about him or had any impressions that you can remember?

O: No, I don't. But I do know the family.

H: Did they go to the parties that all of you went to?

O: I can't remember that they did. Miss Lillian Hague was older than I was.

I wish you could see a lot of pictures that Wyndham White has of that old...

H: Oh, does he have a lot? I hadn't thought about that. I guess he does.

He lives not very far from me.

O: Go down there and get Wyndham to show you.

H: Well, I think I'll do that.

O: Oh, yes. He sent me a whole bunch of 'em for me to identify and I couldn't identify anybody but Mary Shelton. Beautiful, she was. Anna Loomis. But Wyndham says he has some that I am in. I didn't see any that I could identify myself. But he has a great collection of old pictures.

H: Did a lot of the girls that you grew up with go away to college?

O: Yes, they did. Nearly all of them went east to school. Several of them were presented at court in England. The Austin girls went to Europe. Mrs. Austin took her three children and stayed in Dresden for several years.

H: Were the Austins quite wealthy? They must have been.

O: Yes. They were well-to-do people. They were in banking.

H: Do you think their family had money before they came to El Paso?

O: Yes, they must have. We were very intimate friends. I remember this: a patient of my father's, a rich patient from México City, had brought me a very beautiful doll and I called it Feliciana. Little Lillian Austin had the typhoid fever and Pop was taking care of her. He said, "Horace"--he always called me Horace--"you've had your doll for a long time and little Lillian Austin's got typhoid fever and she's going to be in bed for a long

time. I want you to give her your doll." He took my beautiful doll and gave it to Lillian. Now, do you know any father that would do that to a child? My brothers were the apples of my mother's eye and my father was very devoted to me. I was brought up to be unselfish. We had a beautiful family life. Our girlhoods, we were so... Alice Davis, who married Bill Wise, she's Captain Charlie Davis' daughter. And I think, I'm not sure, but Charlie's widow is still living, Fannie Davis--young Charlie. You see, there were two Charlie Davises who were mayor.

H: Yes I know, it's confusing since there were the two.

O: Old Captain Davis. Their home still is standing.

H: In Sunset Heights?

O: No. What street was it on?

H: It wasn't down on Magoffin?

O: No. They used to live down there, though. Alice's mother died when she was born and Miss Chase raised the three children for Mr. Davis.

H: Mrs. Osborn, did you live down on Myrtle Avenue until you left El Paso?

O: I always lived there until they tore it down. Now, we own the property on both sides. I want to tell you about Mr. Luján. You must go to see him. He's a Mexican, but he's very intelligent and he worked for the White House for years and years. He lives in and owns the home that my uncle built. It is the first pressed brick house built in El Paso. It's between two pieces of property that we own. We hope to buy when Mr. Luján sells, because Myrtle Avenue is getting right downtown. I get a nice rent from my parking lots down there. But our little house was torn down. Mr. Luján knows all about San Elizario, and when it was the County Seat. He can tell you about the Salt War. He knows everybody in town because he worked with

the White House for so many years. His house was built by Mr. Floyd Page.

I guess it's 709 Myrtle.

H: Who made the pressed brick? Or did it come in /from out of town/?

O: I don't know. We used to own a brick yard up here in the Upper Valley, but I don't know if we made the pressed brick or not. I don't know who made that.

H: Did your husband own the brick yard?

O: No, not my husband, McCutcheon-Payne and company. They were my uncles and my father. My father was the company. He put in the money but he practiced medicine. The others worked in the business. My beautiful dining room furniture came from this home in Mineral Wells. The McCutcheons later moved to Mineral Wells. McCutcheon-Payne and Company were...my father was the company. My uncle Floyd Payne and W.S. McCutcheon ran the business. They had a hay and grain and fuel company that was on Chihuahua Street. I have my father's visiting list books. They show the names of all the people from the old times. Would you love to see them?

H: Oh, yes, I really would.

O: Well, I have three and you can look at those and see all the names of all the old-time families.

H: I was talking to Mrs. Hill about politics in El Paso. We talked about the differences of opinion between people. We were talking about how it appears that people in El Paso were more or less in two camps. Do you remember Colbert Coldwell at all?

O: Yes. Junior's still living.

H: Yes, the senior was James Hague's law partner. Juege Coldwell was Colbert, too, wasn't he?

O: He may have been.

H: I wonder if you remember any of these big-time politicians?

O: I remember Judge Coldwell. He was a very smart man. Julia Coldwell is still very keen. She is his daughter. She has a son, Bill, who is a lawyer here in town. I can't think of the other boy's name. Colbert was Page Kemp's partner in business for many, many years. If they were prominent in politics, that I don't know.

H: Yes. I get the impression that they definitely were--more in county politics than in the city politics. There seems to have been quite a difference. County politics was very controversial. So I'm anxious to get people's impressions of how they felt. Well, you and Mrs. Hill must be...you were born in 1884 and she was born in '88, but I get the impression that the Hagues didn't associate with everyone. Of course, they lived on a different side of town.

O: The Hagues lived down on South Santa Fe. But they were well thought of people and very intelligent people. My father was their physician.

H: Did they attend parties that you went to?

O: I don't remember that they did.

H: I'm trying to establish if there were cliques in El Paso, if there were certain groups that didn't associate as much with other groups or if it was just a very large society with everyone participating.

O: Well, I don't think there was any rivalry or anything of that kind. We had a social club and we had dances about once a month. And they were at the old Sheldon Hotel for a while then at the Court House, I believe. Whether or not there was a dance hall, I'm not sure. A beautiful old Court House it was.

H: At these dances and these clubs, was the membership mostly all of the same



age group, younger people like you, or did the parents go, too?

O: As I remember, they were not members but just a social group that gathered at these dances. I don't think you had to join a social club or anything of that kind.

H: You don't remember that there were officers or anything?

O: No, nothing of that kind. I don't think there was. The young man always came for you in a hack. You didn't walk. Usually sent flowers to be carried. In those days you didn't have corsages; I don't know why. The men usually sent American Beauty Roses.

H: How old would you say you were when you started dating?

O: I think about 17 or eighteen. I wasn't married until I was twenty-six.

H: You were out of high school?

O: Yes, I was back from Baltimore. I did not graduate here in El Paso. My brother's graduation exercises in '96 were held in the old Meyer Opera House. Everybody sent flowers to the stage.

H: Did you run around with the same group as your brothers?

O: They were older than I, but we all went to the social club dances after I was old enough to go.

H: Were these dances well attended? Do you think there was a fairly large membership?

O: Yes, I think so. They were program dances.

H: Do you think the men drank very much? You hear some stories saying that they really did, that times haven't changed that much.

O: Well, we didn't have a lot of social drinking. And a boy wouldn't come to see a young lady if he had a drink unless he had a Sen-Sen in his mouth. All the drugstores carried little packages of it. At dinner parties we had

champagne and sparkling burgundy, and wines at formal dinners. But we didn't drink hard liquor; girls never did.

H: Well, drinking cocktails is something that came in after the twenties.

O: Yes, I guess so.

H: Do you remember Prohibition in El Paso?

O: Yes. I remember Mr. Osborn tried making some wine at home. And he said I tasted it all up before he got a chance at it.

H: Now, when you had the champagne and what not, was this when you were fairly young or perhaps in your teens?

O: I guess I was eighteen. Our dinner parties were very formal. They were at people's homes and sometimes at the hotel. I remember a very formal dinner party that we went to at the St. Regis. Wine was served but not promiscuously. Nobody got tight.

H: Where did the men in town do their drinking?

O: They did at the Toltec Club. When a new young man would come to town, he would be initiated into the group by what they would call a badger fight. I think they would go down to Charlie Beisswenger's. He and his wife had a beer and food place down on San Francisco Street. I think they had their badger fights down there. They'd have a vicious dog on a chain and one of the boys would hold the dog. Then the young man would have another chain holding the badger under the bed. When the time came he would pull the badger out and it was a chamber with a little beer and a doughnut in it.

H: Do you think the men went to Juárez much, before and after the racetrack was built?

O: Before the racetrack was built, we would go to Juárez dances that were very formal, too. Mr. and Mrs. Deter, Deter and Sour, had a beautiful

place down in the valley. They would give lovely parties and invite the American social set over there. Once they had a fox hunt. I know I was at the party but I don't remember too much about it. They gave lovely parties. The Sours had some on this side. They, Deter and Sour, had a wholesale liquor company. Curt Sour became a physician and was at my brother's bedside in New York. He was the chief surgeon of the Veteran's Hospital in New York City where Owen died. Ernie Sour married Mrs. Charlie Bassett's sister. They lived here in town until he died, not too long ago. The Deter home was on the Mexican side. They had grape vineyards. That was down in the valley below Juárez. They raised a lot of Mission grapes over there.

H: Even when you were a child they were still raising a lot of grapes?

O: Yes. El Paso and Juárez Valley were noted for their Mission grapes. There was a time when we raised lots of very fine onions.

H: Did you visit the Stahlman's a lot?

O: After I was married. They lived down there. Yes, I knew them. They were very nice people.

H: Did you ever ride the inter-urban streetcar down to Ysleta?

O: No, I went by automobile then.

H: Do you have any idea when you had your first car?

O: My Uncle Floyd Payne had about the first automobile that came to El Paso. It was a Stanley Steamer. It ran by steam.

H: Do you have any idea when that was?

O: I don't know. There are just loads of papers that I can't see to go through.

H: We'll go through them.

O: Oh, would you?

H: Yes, I'd love to.

O: They're old newspapers and things that you might find of great interest, but I just can't see to do it. I get too tired. Of course, a lot of it concerns my brother.

H: Is this Josia Crosby's descendents that lived on San Antonio Street?

O: Judge Crosby. They lived on Myrtle Avenue next door to the First Presbyterian Church. It was a beautiful home and they lived in great style. The maids were all properly dressed with the little caps. They were very much exclusive people. Mrs. Crosby was a beautiful woman and she had a daughter, Mrs. Hardcastle, who lived in Houston. I didn't know her. Then there was Mrs. Deter, Dodo and Kate. They spent their winters here and they had a beautiful summer home on Long Island, South Hampton. I had pictures of both those homes because they were very intimate friends of my family. My father was their physician. And that painting of the little girl in the snow was painted by Percy Morang who married Jennie Crosby. They were here one winter and their little boy had pneumonia. My father attended him. Mr. Morang painted that picture and gave it to my father and mother. He was the nephew of the famous marine painter, Thomas Morang.

### LEIGH WHITE OSBORN

I was born in Tucson, Arizona on November 19, 1884. My mother was born in Petersburg, Virginia and her maiden name was Katherine J. Payne. My mother's family home was destroyed in the "Battle of the Crater" during the Civil War. The Payne family then refugeed to Colorado. My mother graduated from William and Mary College in Virginia.

My father, Alward McKiel White, was born on the Eastern shore of Maryland. He was a second or third generation graduate in medicine from the University of Maryland. Both of my parents had degrees in Greek and Latin.

My father came west in pursuit of adventure. He had a ranch on the Platt River in Colorado. My parents met and were married in Evans, Colorado and their "honeymoon" was a trip to the ranch in a covered wagon. This ranch project was a complete failure so my father came to El Paso and later my mother followed by stage with my oldest brother, Alward. My father was probably the first practicing physician in this section of the country. My father, mother and brother (Alward) were taken into the Magoffin home until they could find a place to live.

After a short time they moved into a small adobe house situated on the corner of Mesa Avenue and San Antonio Street. I think it is where Lerner's store is now located. Probably at that time there were no more than seven American families living in El Paso. Among them were the Magoffins, Kemps, Marrs, Whites and Crosbys. Will Crosby was the first white child born in El Paso.

After about two years my father was appointed Collector of Customs and they moved to Tucson, Arizona. My parents also lived in Silver City for a short time, returning to El Paso about 1886.

The first home I remember was on Myrtle Avenue, at the corner of Myrtle and Ochoa. It was a one story house, but had large rooms and was very comfortable. It was built of brick and was heated with wood stoves which used mesquite roots for fuel. It also had an open fireplace in the dining room. The wood was brought into town on the backs of droves of burros.

Entertaining was very formal. Champagne or other wine was served at dinner parties--but no "hard" liquor. There were no cocktail parties. Many of the ladies had days at home where friends called and tea or hot chocolate or coffee was served. Callers always left a calling card when making a visit. For the more formal parties, smilax was ordered from California for decoration. The Social Club had a formal dance about once a month with programs. The girls wore lovely long evening dresses and long white kid gloves. The young men wore dress suits and white kid gloves.

During the summer season we had weekly band concerts at what is now San Jacinto Plaza. The bandstand was in the center of the plaza (where the aligator pool was later). The band was the famous old McGinty Band. We also had many first class road shows at the Opera House.

Many of the more affluent ladies ordered their nicer dresses from a Mrs. Taylor who lived in Louisville, Kentucky. There was once an ordinance passed by the city government forbidding women to ride bicycles dressed in bloomers.

Domestic help was often Chinese or Mexican, and I think a few colored. People seldom ate out except to go to the English Kitchen--a Chinese Restaurant--where we went after the theatre or dances. All

other restaurants were Chinese as were the laundries and vegetable men who came every morning from down the valley with fresh produce. Wonderful Mission grapes, pears and fine onions were raised on both sides of the river.

The first grocery stores I recall were John B. Watson's (noted for its fine quality goods) and Steward and McNair's. We also had three beautiful Chinese stores. One the 4th of July these Chinese stores furnished the firecrackers. Chinese funerals and Chinese New Year were spectacular events.

Our first candy store was Cooper's, located on El Paso Street, followed by The Elite, owned by Mr. Clarence Pickrell. The early dry goods stores were Diamond's, located on San Antonio Street, Calisher's, Cannon's and Lightbody and James, located at Overland and El Paso Streets. The Popular Dry Goods Store was first located on South El Paso Street in the same block as the Meyer Opera House. I think Mr. Felix Brunswick was owner of the White House. Very fine French gloves and materials of all kinds could be bought in Juárez.

The streets were dusty and unpaved. During the hot summer months "sprinkling cars" would be driven through the streets several times each day to settle the flying dust. We had horned toads, lizards, tarantulas, scorpions, and after a rain the delightful odor of wet greasewood and the croaking of hundreds of frogs filled the air--"out of the nowhere into the here."

The first public transportation was the little mule car. Mr. Hill was the driver of the one on San Antonio Street. The first electric cars were open and we had trolley car parties. Also hay rides were a part of our social activities.

The only schools I recall were Central High School (also a grammar school) and Bailey School, both noted for good discipline. The boys had seasonal recreation which included marble season, kite season and top season. Baseball was played in the vacant lots. At recess the playgrounds of the boys and girls were separated. We all drank from the same bucket of water with tin dippers.

The teachers I remember were Miss Stevenson, Miss Hunter, Miss Gertrude Windsor, Mr. Roach, Mrs. Perry and Mrs. Bailey (for whom the school was named.) Then only school superintendent I can recall was Mr. Putnam. Bailey School was located on Montana Street where the YMCA is now located. Teachers who taught specific subjects were Miss Lula Jones and Miss Findley Barron from St. Louis (who later married one of my uncles), who were the Kindergarten teachers; Miss Katie More Brown, who was our music teacher; and Miss Mary Gates (later Mrs. C. R. Morehead), who was the drawing teacher. The graduation exercises were held at the Meyer's Opera House, which was located where the Paso Del Norte Hotel is now. My brothers graduated in 1896.

The saloons where most of the killings took place were scattered through the entire downtown district. The Red Light District was on Utah Street ( now South Mesa). The women from the Red Light District drove handsome horses and buggies and were beautifully dressed. They were not, I think, allowed to solicit on the streets. Some of the girls were Gypsy Davenport, May Palmer and Tillie Howard. My father was their attending physician.

There was no crime on the street as we know it today and a good woman or a little girl was perfectly safe on the streets of El Paso-- day or night--although it had the reputation of being the toughest town



in the nation. It is hard to understand how so much real culture and so much crime existed side by side in our small Texas town.

Next, I will record the recollections I have of the families living on our block of Myrtle Avenue, northside. They were Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Coles and the brothers of Mr. Coles; Frank and Otis, Realtors; Mr. and Mrs. Zack White; Mr. and Mrs. U. S. Steward (who was a banker). Also the Hubbard Family lived on Myrtle Avenue, and their younger son, Dr. Louis (Jack) Hubbard, was Dean of Texas Women's University of Texas in Austin. W. F. Payne and family (my uncle) and our family (Mother, Father, Alward, Owen and Leigh) finished out the block. On the south side of our block on Myrtle Avenue lived Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Morehead (a banker and one of the organizers of the State National Bank), Mr. and Mrs. Henry Beach, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Noak, and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Wood. Mrs. Wood was a daughter of Judge and Mrs. Crosby, one of our most distinguished old families. Also on the south side of Myrtle Avenue was the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Dean (lawyer and judge). The Deans had no children and my brothers and I were brought up at Mr. Dean's feet listening to him read from Mark Twain and everything he could find about Napoleon Bonaparte, of whom he was a great admirer.

About politics I recall very little. I do recall that at one time we had what was called the War of the Red Roses and the White. The question of whether to let crime continue or to endeavor to try and clean up the city was the issue. My uncles were on the side of the White Roses.

My father practiced medicine and his love of family and humanity were his life! A beautiful memorial address entitled The Beloved Physician was given in his memory at the little Episcopal Church of

St. Clements on Mesa Street by the Reverend Mayo Cabel Martin and published in all the daily papers. A stranger on the street at the time of the funeral was heard to remark, "If I could have a funeral like that, I would feel that I had not lived in vain." Not a dry eye existed on the streets of El Paso during the funeral procession.

My father kept his horse and buggy at Longwell Transfer Company, telephone no. 1. It was delivered to our house early each morning and anytime in the night when needed for a night call. Night calls and house calls were made in those "good old days."

Many of our early citizens came to El Paso seeking health and a cure for consumption. After regaining health they often remained, not only because of the wonderful climate, but because of the friendships they had formed with the "kind hearts and gentle people" who had come to El Paso before them. There was a saying that after a taste of the water of the muddy Río Grande, one always came back for more.

When my father died my brothers came home from school, Alward from the School of Mines at Golden, Colorado where he was studying Mining Engineering, and Owen from the University of Texas at Austin where he was a student of law. Owen then went to work in one of the banks but always had a yearning to write. He later became a professional writer, first for the Brooklyn Eagle, then the New York Times and finally was on Collier Magazine's staff for twelve years where he became an associate editor. He published twelve books, all of which were well received.

After my father's death, my Mother took Alward and me to Baltimore where Alward entered the University of Maryland's medical school. I went to school in the Baltimore public schools and for five years we remained there visiting old friends in Washington, D. C., Petersburg,

Haymarket and Warrenton, Virginia. We returned to El Paso after my brother's graduation and intership. Alward took a position as Smelter physician and had charge of the Smelter Hospital. He later moved to Shafter, Texas as physician for the mining company there and also was in charge of their hospital.

At the time of my brother Alward's death the mines had closed down. He requested that he be buried there in Shafter. My brother Owen was there making the funeral arrangements and said to the Catholic priest (there was only the one church, the Roman Catholic Church), "Father, we cannot bury my brother from your church can we, as he is an Episcopalian?" The Priest replied, "We certainly will bury him from my church if the Pope beheads me tomorrow." He was one of the best and kindest of men. Shortly before his final illness he drove 90 miles to Presidio to see a sick woman. After my brother had treated her, her husband took \$3.00 from his pocket to pay my brother. Alward said, "Keep your money, you need it more than I do." Forty men walked bareheaded beside the hearse bearing the coffin from the church to the mining company's cemetery. Alward was another "Beloved Physician."

To return to my years in El Paso as a young woman, after my mother's death I made my home with my Aunt and Uncle (Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Payne). Several months of the year I spent in Mineral Wells with my Aunt and Uncle, Mr. and Mrs. W. S. McCutcheon. They had no children and I was like a daughter to them.

My young ladyhood was a very happy one. I made many trips back to Baltimore where many of my father's family were still living. Once I traveled with our neighbor, Mrs. Dean, and we went to New York for the Theatre Season and to take in the sights. We stayed in the Imperial Hotel--

long ago destroyed by fire.

Once with my Cousin Carter White, who was raised in our home and like a brother to me, I visited for several days in Chicago. We were entertained by Mr. Will Marshall, who was an old friend of my future husband. From there we journeyed to Niagara Falls, then to Albany, New York, where we took a boat and went down the Hudson River to New York City. Carter had a brother Winston living in New York City and with him as guide we saw the sights of the city. On another of my trips east I traveled with my brother Owen. We spent several delightful weeks in Baltimore and Washington. I knew many young students attending Georgetown University and we enjoyed all the happiness of carefree youth. I had a canoe trip on the Potomac, visited the White House, the Smithsonian Institution and the Washington Monument. Both Washington and Baltimore were lovely cities. On our visit I had the privilege of a private presentation to President McKinley.

In referring, again, to those seeking health in El Paso's splendid climate, I remember one very dear friend. Her name was Mrs. McCauley. She and her three year old girl were put on the train in Washington, D. C. with tickets to El Paso and very little money. Mrs. McCauley was an Episcopalian and through this connection met my Aunt, Mrs. W. S. McCutcheon, who took them into her home. My father served as physician for Mrs. McCauley and her daughter. Both his services and my aunt's hospitality were without monetary reward. When Mrs. McCauley regained her health, she returned to Washington--but never saw her husband again. She opened a boarding house at 1019 P. Street. When I visited in Washington I usually stayed in this boarding house. While I was once in Washington I saw the inauguration of Teddy Roosevelt. I became acquainted

with a Congressman from Alabama, Judge Adamson, and through him received a formal invitation to the White House Reception. I can still hear the White House Butler boom out, as I entered the reception, "Miss White from Texas." I was privileged to shake the hand of President Roosevelt and a long line of people important in Washington circles in those days. This was just another event in the carefree and happy life I had as a girl.

I was married in 1911 to Oliver S. Osborn of Cameron, Missouri. He was a graduate of Missouri University and later studied in Heidleburg, Germany. By profession he was a Civil Engineer and was a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, which he considered a great honor. He traveled throughout Europe studying European methods of railroad contruction. He was in charge of construction of "The Orient" from Kansas City to Presidio. He then went to Mexico and spent three years locating the road from Chihuahua to Topolobampo on the Pacific Coast. During the Alaska gold rush of 1898 he went to Alaska but did not strike it rich.

At the time of our marriage he was Chief Division Engineer in charge of contruction for the Oregon Shortline Railroad and we lived in many parts of Idaho and Eastern Oregon for five years. He lived to be 96 years of age and died in 1966.

We had one fine son, Oliver, who following his graduation from Texas A & M where he majored in Chemical Engineering, spent three years roughnecking in the oilfields. In 1941 he went to work for the Dow Chemical company in Freeport, Texas. He married Emily Ruth Butler of Houston and they live in Lake Jackson, Texas. They are the parents of three children. My grandchildren are Jane Leigh, a junior at Texas University at Austin, majoring in Accounting; John Oliver Osborn, a freshman student in Civil Engineering at Texas A & M; and my youngest grandchild, Paul White, in intermediate school in Lake Jackson.

The mayors of El Paso I have known well were Capt. Charlie Davis, whose daughter Alice (Mrs. W. D. Wise) and I were like sisters; Charlie Jr.; R. C. Semple; and Judge Sweeney, who married Nellie Humphreys of Marfa, who was an old friend of mine. These were all mayors of El Paso I knew personally. Another fine man, Mayor Robinson, lived in our neighborhood and was killed by a falling brick wall after a fire somewhere in the city. His daughter, Mary Frances, married the famous General Terry Allen.

I recall this event in my childhood with much amusement. The Crosby family had given me a beautiful palomino pony equiped with a side saddle (in those days it would have been very unladylike for a little girl to have ridden astride). Our corral was on the 700 block of Texas Street, now in downtown El Paso. My uncle kept two cows and a carriage horse there and we had one cow and my pony in this corral.

One summer evening I had ridden late and the colored man who did the milking and took care of the other stock had gone home. I unsaddled my pony and put him in the corral myself. I woke up in the middle of the night and saw the three cows out in the middle of the street illuminated by the bright moonlight. Knowing that I must have left the corral gate unfastened, I jumped out of bed, slipped on my high button shoes without buttoning them, and clad only in these shoes and my light cotton nightgown ran out after the cows, thinking I could easily drive them back into the corral.

I had a long chase before I finally got them turned toward home. By that time my brothers had missed me and were out in the yard within earshot of the night watchman who tapped me on the shoulder saying, "And what do you think you're doing!" I piped up with, "I'm Dr. White's little girl out chasing the cows,"--as though that were a nightly affair.

My brothers overheard this conversation, and as long as we were all together, nothing delighted them more than to tease me by saying, "I'm Dr. White's little girl out chasing the cows."

I finish my story with this nostalgic remembrance, "how dear to this heart are the scenes of my childhood."