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Mrs. Hugh White

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Mrs. Hugh White
INTERVIEWER: Leon C. Metz and Robin Fuller
PROJECT: El Paso History
DATE OF INTERVIEW: June 3, 1968
TERMS OF USE: Unrestricted

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BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Wife of Dr. Hugh White.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

El Paso around the turn of the century; Capt. Greet; Chinese population; Stormsville; Pat Garrett; Tenderloin District.

Transcript; 26 pages

Mrs. Hugh White

June 3, 1968

Interviewed by Robin Fuller and Leon Metz

W: There is a man at the college who has written a very good book about the history of El Paso, Dr. Sonnichsen. He brought all his proofs for me to read. He's done a very good job. Maury, my brother was here then and he interviewed him a great bit. I had a new doctor here not long ago that asked me a great deal about the early doctors. When I could I directed him to people who were better able to tell him than I was. He is with Dr. Breck and I can't recall his name right now.

M: Is he the one who is writing the history of the Medical Association?

W: Yes, I believe he is.

M: Mrs. White, you've been here a long time, haven't you?

W: I'll be eighty-six on December 7.

M: Well, how do you acquire all this good health?

W: I haven't too much good health. Generally I'm pretty well, but I had a bad fall about a year ago and it broke me up. Also, I had operations on my eyes and I don't walk very well.

M: You seem to have an amazingly sharp intellect.

W: Well, thank you, but it isn't as good as it used to be.

M: Mrs. White, when were you born?

W: I was born in 1882 in Calvert, Texas. You've never heard of it. It's a tiny little town. My father was a lawyer and he lived in Calvert and Bryan for a little while before he was married, and then he came here. He belonged to the firm of Davis, Beal, and Kemp. They were older men who took him in when he was a young man just starting out. Then they all moved to El Paso.

M: What year did you come to El Paso?

W: I think that it was 1886, but I am not sure about that. I think that I can look through some old files and find out.

M: Did Davis, Beal, and Kemp come to El Paso with your father?

W: They paid him a salary for a while before they came to El Paso. Then they took him into the firm as Davis, Beal, and Kemp. Major Davis was the oldest member of the firm and then Capt. Beal, and then my father.

M: Why did they come to El Paso?

W: To make a living. It wasn't too long after the Civil War and there was no money in the South, and they had tried these other little towns and they just didn't make a living there. El Paso was a new town. The railroad had just come through, and it proved to be a very good move for them. They didn't have any trouble making a living here. They weren't rich, but then nobody was rich in the South.

M: You called Mr. Davis, Major Davis. Was he a retired Confederate soldier?

W: He and Capt. Beal were both retired officers. My father had been in the army but he was very much younger. He was at school at the Virginia Military Institute and as a last resort (I can hardly keep from weeping when I think of it) sixteen-year-old boys were called out by the Confederacy. My father was one of them. The privations were terrible at the time. They lived on parched corn and anything they could get to eat. Everything had been ruined by the North and the soldiers. My father had grown up in a good home in Gloucester County, Virginia. They had slaves, but he went through every privation on earth after the Civil War. He also spent a long time in a terrible Union prison. You read about how bad the Confederate prisons were

but you never hear about the Union prisons. My father was one of the most honest men that ever lived and you can't imagine the privations that he suffered.

M: Do you recall what prison it was?

W: No. Now, Maury could tell you that. He was closer to my father because he was a boy and my father told him more things than he did me. Maury was five or six years older than I am. When you think of what they do for the poor people now and think of what those poor men went through then without help from any source. My father, this promising young man, slept with two other young men on a mattress under the counter in a store when he first came to Texas.

M: This was in Calvert?

W: No, this was in one of the other small towns, and I don't know which one it was. He lived in many different towns and he was often cold and hungry and wet. He survived everything but his health broke. He developed tuberculosis. It was discovered after he married and had a family. He had to stop practicing for a while and go away.

M: What did Major Davis and Mr. Beal look like?

W: I remember them very well. They were both very impressive looking men. Major Davis died rather early. He was a magnificent looking man as I remember him. He was very elegant in his manners and his bearing. Capt. Beal outlived my father. He was a very striking looking southern man. He was called "The Silver Tounge Orator of Texas". You don't hear much real oratory now, but Capt. Beal was a real orator. My father was the younger man and he bore the brunt of everything. They were very good to him, though.

M: Tell us what your father looked like.

W: Well, he was not a large man and he had a moustache. He was rather stout and, I would say, a little under five feet eight. His hair was thin. He had a horror of going bald. His hair got thinner and thinner. I remember that my stepmother had a little bottle of white hair ointment and every day when he came home for dinner at two o'clock she would pour some of this on his scalp and rub it in with a soft toothbrush that she kept for that purpose. She kept doing that every day and he never went bald. I don't know what it was, but my husband, Dr. White, thought that it was the massage that did it. He said that if women had short hair like men that they would go bald because that it was the pulling and brushing that you did to long hair that kept women from going bald. Anyway, I advise all the gentlemen that I know who are going bald to get something that would be nice to rub in their hair.

M: The firm of Davis, Beal, and Kemp was one of the most significant law firms in El Paso.

W: Oh, yes, they were the oldest in Texas.

M: Did they not defend John Selman for murdering John Wesley Hardin?

W: I don't think so.

M: Do you recall any of their more famous cases?

W: Well, they had a large practice but they were not criminal lawyers. They did what my son does now, corporation work. They were the attorneys for the Southern Pacific. They did do some criminal work, I know.

M: Do you recall Mr. T.T. Toad? I have seen his name associated with the firm. If he was a partner, he came and went rather quickly.

W: No. I don't remember him and I don't think there was another partner.

Major Davis died here in El Paso. He lived in a beautiful home near ours. It last belonged to the A.B. Poes. It has been torn down. My father was very devoted to Davis. He had been very kind to my father when he was a young man. I know that when my father became ill before he went into the firm, Major Davis insisted that his salary be paid straight through the illness. My father had been very valuable. He went to a little town in east Texas where it was cool and nice. He sold land there because in those days you weren't supposed to rest when you had tuberculosis, you stayed busy. He sold ranches and traveled by buckboard. It must have been a rough life but he had to work because he had a family. Before Major Davis died, my father went to his house and stayed there at night and took care of him just like a son. Night after night he took care of his old partner who had been kind to him.

M: I gather that Major Davis did not have a family.

W: Yes, he did. He had a daughter and a son. The son was worthless and the daughter was selfish and frivolous. Before dying, the son straightened up and became a Texas Ranger. He had several children but I don't know where they are now. The daughter married and lived in California.

Captain Beal had a very nice family. He died here in El Paso with his family around him. He had three or four daughters and some of his family is still here.

M: What are some of your earliest memories about El Paso? Do you recall your first day in El Paso?

W: I can't remember anything about that. I was too little. We lived in a little three room frame house. It was a rather nice looking little house,

grass in front of it. It was on San Antonio and Florence street, where the El Paso Seed Company is. My mother died when I was quite small at the birth of a third baby, a boy who also died. She had lost two other children before they ever came to El Paso. Then, we moved to a little adobe house in front of the old jail which was down on Campbell Street. This was a very exciting place to live.

M: Is this the one that was torn down two or three years ago?

W: Yes, it was the old county jail and we lived across the street from it.

M: Your father must have been able to get a lot of business living there.

W: I don't know that he took that kind of business. I had an uncle who was a deputy sheriff. His name was Willy Maury, he was my mother's brother. My mother's name was Mary Lewis Maury.

M: Who was sheriff at that time?

W: I don't remember his name. I know just how he looked; he had a brown beard. I think that Windham has a picture of him. He has many pictures hanging in his office. I can't think of [what] his name was but Willy was a deputy sheriff and he used to get into a lot of trouble. He was very good at drinking. My mother had four or five very fine brothers and Uncle Willy was the gay one. My mother was an angel and she brought him out here to reform him but nobody ever reformed Uncle Willy. He was attractive and winning but he would get off on these toots. He never had a family. He was engaged before he came here to a lovely girl. Her mother finally told her that she could not marry Willy.

M: Do you remember anything that happened to your Uncle Willy?

W: Yes, I do, but maybe I shouldn't tell it. Well, anyway, there was another

family that lived next to the jail, the Marr family. They were old people--I mean, a pioneer family. And Willy Marr was my age. We used to play together a lot. One day Willy came running in and yelling that the devil was coming and we had better hide. Well, we ran somewhere and hid and we could hear pistols going off in the air. That was very embarrassing to my father, of course, because it was Uncle Willy firing his pistols into the air. He didn't do any harm, but I don't think that he kept his job very long. There was always lots of excitement but you can't imagine what lovely people lived in this town. They lived on one side of town and all the others lived on the other.

M: Was there, in essence, a right and wrong side of the tracks? Where did these good people live and where did the bad people live?

W: Well, I couldn't tell you about that but I think that the bad people lived more in the south end of town. But there were lots of good people who lived in the south end of town because they had to live somewhere, like we lived in the little adobe house by the jail. The acequia ran right through town. It ran along under where the sidewalk is now on San Antonio Street, across town and down into Olive street. My father used to irrigate from it. We didn't grow any crops because we had such a small place, but he did irrigate our front yard. The people across the street, a Jewish family, owned half a block and they had a big orchard and some vegetables. The acequia flowed past the Magoffin orchard which came almost to our house on the other side of the street. They had a big orchard and also grew some vegetables, but it was rented out to the Chinamen. The Chinese raised their crops there and sold them all around town. They had grapes, apples, peaches, and all

kinds of things. I really don't ever remember the acequia going dry but I suppose that it did in between, like the irrigation ditches do now. When I was a child, I walked across it every day to a private school.

M: Where did people get their drinking water?

W: The drinking water was terrible. They got it from the river and you can't imagine anything harder. I remember looking at it under a glass one time and seeing all kind of wiggly things. My father had a Mexican filter. It was in a frame and it was made of volcanic stone. It was triangle shaped. You poured that awful water into it and it filtered through. This we used for our drinking water then.

M: Did the people take the water from the river in buckets or did they dig wells?

W: We got ours from a well. A man drilled it and took care of it, but the water was so hard. It must have been impure but I don't remember anyone getting sick. People hauled water in tanks from Deming. Most folks used this for their drinking water and the other water was used for washing clothes and so on. Those were real primitive days.

M: You mentioned some of the very nice families here. Do you recall their names?

W: Yes, I knew them all. The Magoffin family; several Paynes, the Floyd Paynes; his wife died just a short time ago. His niece still lives here, Mrs. Osborn; she is Owen White's sister. Her father was Dr. White. The Kneelands; the McAfees--he was with the bank. Mrs. McAfee's family were pioneers but they didn't live here long and moved on the México. She didn't get married until after she was grown but she always kept in very close touch with her parents. There was also the Shelton family; my brother Maury, married a

Shelton. There were the Howes. They more or less stayed together; they were very refined and they entertained more formally than they do now. Everything was done in the nicest way.

M: You mentioned the Magoffins. What was your personal opinion of Joseph Magoffin? What kind of an individual was he?

W: He had a long beard down to his belt. He was a very close friend of my father. He was a good citizen; a good man. I knew his whole family, Josie and Jim. They had that huge house. It has enormous rooms. The walls are two feet thick. They entertained a great deal. Mrs. Magoffin was a great person to help all the newcomers, to invite them in. When my husband came here, he didn't know anybody but he had two letters, one to my father and one to the Magoffins. Mrs. Magoffin got hold of him and made him purchase a dress, telling him that he had to go to parties if he wanted to meet anybody. She was the kind of person who made the young people do what they ought to do and to meet the best people in town. They were always giving parties. They had a lot of civic feeling.

The Judge was mayor two or three times. Of course, I was very young then. At that time we used to go to the Plaza and listen to the band play on Friday and Sunday nights. It was a great thing to have a date take you there. One afternoon I was sitting on the porch and I didn't have a date and the old judge went by on his horse and he called to me, saying he was taking me to the park. He told his wife afterwards that all the other girls had dates and a nice girl like Annie Kemp was neglected. The boys didn't have enough sense to ask her; so he did the honors. I was embarrassed for anyone to see me. All the other girls had dates and here I was with

the Judge. But I thought that it was such a cute thing for him to do. Most of the young people in town would go on Friday night and Sunday afternoon. Sometimes there was a military band, but mostly it was the McGinty Band. The park had lots of trees and flowers and grass and it looked better than it does now. They also had a pond but I don't know when the alligators came here.

The Sheldons were a very nice family, southern. I think they were from Mississippi. Mrs. W.D. Harold is a Sheldon, and Mrs. Perrenot. They are all quite prominent socially. Mr. Hooten's children are Mr. Sheldon's great-great grandchildren. There were a lot of them. They had five daughters. One of them died very early and left two children. But, there are a lot of grandchildren. They used to tell a story about Mr. Sheldon, who had so many grandchildren, that once while sitting in the park in Kern Place, a little boy came up and he was so nice and polite to Mr. Sheldon that the old man was charmed. He told the little boy that he was awfully nice and wanted to know who he belonged to. The child then told him that he was his grandson.

I knew Owen White very well. His father was Dr. White. He was a small man, very educated, and considered a very good doctor. He was a very fine man, very much loved as a physician. His daughter still lives here, but Owen died a good many years ago. Owen got his start writing here. I think that he wrote the book, OUT OF THE DESERT, here. He improved greatly in his writing as he went along. He became a very good writer, but he wasn't always accurate as he might have been. His own sister told me that writers write to make a good story and not to tell the truth. He made lots of money, and he was a very smart man. I imagine that he was happy when he left here

and went back east. He was very ambitious as a writer. I used to see him from time to time whenever he would come here for a visit. He married a girl from New York whose name was Hazel. He died up there.

M: Did you know the Greets? Captain Greet was quite an interesting person.

W: Yes, he was a man just full of charm. His wife is still alive. She was the sister of one of our first Episcopal ministers. His daughter is still alive and I think that she teaches at the University. The first man she married was killed in an automobile, I think. They had one little girl. The second man she married was Sheldon Hall.

M: You mentioned the Chinese a while ago. Do you recall anything about them?

W: There was a big colony of them and they were fine citizens. They fought among themselves sometimes but they never bothered anybody else. Everybody liked the Chinese. All the laundrymen we had were the Chinese. Many of them worked for the American families. My family had a Chinese cook for a long time, and as long as he lived he was a fine cook and a good citizen.

M: I read a piece once where Judge Blacker made the remark that down in Washington Park, when some of their own people were acting up, they would try them in their own kangaroo court and would hang them in the streets.

W: I never heard of that; but of course there wasn't any Washington Park. I do think they disciplined each other pretty well. As I recall they all lived down in south El Paso. That's where the Mexicans, most people who were not Anglo-Saxons, lived. They did some intermarrying because there were not many Chinese women there. The men all came to America to make a living and expected to go back, but many of them never did. We had a friend who adopted a little Chinese boy. (No, I don't think that she could adopt

him because he had to be adopted by a Chinese family.) Anyway, his uncle who brought him here let her keep him because he wanted him to learn English and she had been a school teacher. He stayed with her for the rest of his life. He and my younger brother, Herndon Kemp, were great friends; they played together. I can't call his name. He died about two years ago and he left Herndon a little bit of money. When Mrs. McGowen died, she had taken him out to California, and he stayed right with her. She died and she left him everything that she had. Whenever Herndon would go to California, he would see him. I don't think the Chinese left El Paso; I think that they died out. Some of them in their old age went back to China.

My father's partner, Captain Beal, had a Chinaman whom we always called Juan. He was a wonderful person. He lived with them so long as Captain and Mrs. Beal kept house. Then he lived with one of the daughters and he practically raised Nannie's children. I remember somebody complaining once about all these young girls going to the movies with a Chinaman. Nannie replied that he had raised her and that he was more strict with Nancy than she was and they, the girls, would be well taken care of. Believe me, Nancy had to walk straight when Juan was there. Then Mr. Joe Williams, Nannie's husband, died and she moved up the valley somewhere and they raised chickens and a little garden. Juan stayed with her for a long time. He was a wonderful gardener and an accomplished cook. He was a real character. After he got old, he got this thing about the old country and went back to China. At first many Chinese came to the United States but quotas were soon in effect and many of them couldn't get in. So, the Chinese died out.

M: I gather from some of the area newspapers that they were discriminated against.

W: They may have been but I don't know. I do know that people were fond of them. My father had Chinese friends and they were devoted. They were great people to give presents. They used to give us things from China at Christmas. If they got into trouble they would come to my father and he would help them. I remember once when my brother Maury was young, he was the County Attorney and he had to prosecute. And he walked into the courtroom to prosecute a Chinese and my father walked into the room to defend the Chinese. Maury didn't understand, he asked my father why. My father said that the Chinaman didn't have any money and he felt that someone ought to defend him. Father won his case. I think that the Chinese had their own mayor and tried each other but, of course, they were subject to the law.

M: We mentioned Judge Blacker. What did he look like?

W: He was a very imposing looking man. He had a big white moustache. I knew all the Blackers but I never knew them well. As I remember, he was an old man when I first saw him. His name was Allan Blacker. He had a daughter that I knew well. She taught school here. He had three daughters and one son. Aileen was the one that I knew. She was about my age. Mamie was another. Dick was a deputy sheriff here for a long time.

The Cadwalladers were an old family in the valley. They had a daughter, Grace, who married. I think that Mark Cadwallader is a farmer down there. He is a very good farmer. He would be an old man now. A friend of mine, Mrs. Easter, might be able to tell you if he is still alive. She was a Porcher. Her first name is Lila. Mark wanted to marry my friend

Lila, but she married someone else. Tommy, his nephew, would be able to tell you anything that you want to know. His family came here very early. The Cadwalladers were good people. The old man was quite a scientific farmer; he used to experiment with things.

M: Do you recall the village that used to be where Kern Place is now? I've heard that it was an Indian village, but some say that it was a Mexican settlement.

W: It was never an Indian village; it was just the poor Mexicans. A man named Storm owned all that land. He wouldn't sell it and I just couldn't imagine why. Somebody said that he was kind and that he just didn't want to bother those people. I think that he collected rent from them. I don't know how they got water. For many years before Stormsville became a settlement, the only thing up there was a little stone house where some people named McKelligon lived. The boys used to have a horse and buggy and they drove to school every day. Maury could have told you all about them. They were very good people as far as I know. I never heard anything about them. I don't know how they got water. I guess they hauled it. You know, it was a great thing to haul water.

M: How did that settlement of poor Mexicans get started then?

W: Well, Storm died and I suppose he left his money to somebody and they sold the land. Then Kern came along but he settled in Kern Place and there was nothing on the rim for a long time. I think that Stormsville was still there when Kern came along. I don't remember hearing about any troubles when the Mexicans were moved out of there. You could see all these little huts from El Paso. I wouldn't be surprised if they didn't come down into town and do some stealing.

M: Switching from some of the good people to some of the bad people, do you recall Tom Powers?

W: Yes, he was a big, handsome, fine-looking man with one of those big moustaches. He was quite heavy set. He was compact; he didn't look fat. He was medium in height. Everyone liked Tom Powers. He was a good fellow even though he was a saloon keeper and a gambler. Some they liked and some they didn't like; but he was a very out-going person. I remember Manning Clements was killed in his saloon. But, I don't remember that it was Tom Power's saloon; I think it was in Joe Brown's saloon. He was the bartender there. I don't think that anybody ever knew for sure who killed him but it was thought that it was Joe Brown. I also think that everybody wanted Manning Clements killed. It seems that he was a very undesirable person. I just remember hearing about him. The remarks that I heard made were mostly made by my brother, Maury.

M: Do you recall seeing Pat Garrett?

W: Oh yes, he lived not far away from our house on Olive Street, just one block. He was a man. I remember how impressed I was with him. He was Collector of Customs and I think he was pretty popular. Maude Austin and I got into trouble at the bridge one time. We didn't try to smuggle anything but we tried to bring some things home, thinking that we were so important that they wouldn't charge us any duty. We were young girls then. They tried to charge us and we had spent all our money in Juárez. They had beautiful things over there that you couldn't buy here, gloves and beautiful silks. There were lots of respectable women here who smuggled things back but my father was very firm about the law and we were all told

that we were never to do it. Maude and I didn't try to smuggle but we didn't have any money left and they took our things from us.

I don't know if you have ever heard of Uncle Joe Pollard. He was a druggist here, a very well respected person. He was sort of uncle-in-law to all of us. We went to Uncle Joe and told him what happened and we wanted to know what we could do about it. He told us to go see Pat Garrett. We went to see him in the customs house which was where Kress is now on Oregon Street. He was so polite and such a gentleman. He got our things back for us. I was very much impressed with him because I had heard lots of stories about him. He was married to a Mexican. He was very well liked. He wasn't a killer; he was a law officer. He didn't kill Billy the Kid because he wanted to. He was a desperado and eventually somebody had to kill him. People have tried to glorify Billy but there wasn't any glory about him.

M: At that time, was it customary for the men to frequent the prostitutes? I've heard that Garrett consorted with a very well known prostitute and I wonder if you know who that could be?

W: No, I don't know that, but I'll tell you what two bad little girls did once. I never had any push to me but I was curious and I wanted to know things. Rosie Windsor was a friend of mine; her family was English. Rosie was quite a horsewoman and she always could get a horse and buggy from somewhere. They were poor, but they had the best times. Rosie and I went for a ride one day. Pat Garrett appeared along the road with a high-stepping horse and a high-stepping lady in with him. If you tell that don't attach my name to it. I know lots of things that I wouldn't want my name linked

with. Rosie wanted to follow them because she identified the parties as Pat Garrett and Mrs. Hunt. So, I thought that it would be fun. They went this way and then that way and there we were, right behind them. They had a terrible time shaking us. He wasn't supposed to be out with Mrs. Hunt. I guess that she had a husband, but I don't know. We followed them a long, long way. When they found that they couldn't shake us, we lost interest in the game. My father would have given me a beating if he had known that I had done that. I don't recall Mrs. Hunt's first name but she was a good-looking woman. Pat wouldn't have bothered with her if she hadn't been. I only remember seeing her that one time; I never saw her again. I don't think she lived in the Tenderloin district. This took place down in the Washington Park area. We didn't get close enough to them for him to say anything to us. I would never have had enough courage to do that on my own; but Rosie would have done anything.

As I remember him, Pat Garrett always looked very nice. He was a dark man and if he had a moustache it was very small. He was very nice looking but he looked like a picture-book man. We didn't get close enough to see whether or not he wore a gun. He had several children; one of them was a blind daughter, but I don't know whether he had trouble with his wife or not. She was a very nice girl. She always reminded me of Helen Keller. She used to sing; she had a beautiful voice. I think that she was a girl of some brains. The other children I didn't know.

M: What was the general feeling about the girls that lived down in the Tenderloin District?

W: Oh, horrible. They did have beautiful homes, so they say. Magoffin was the best street in town. It wasn't paved but it was what was called 'macadamized'.

The ladies used to ride by our house. I never would have known who they were but there was always some little girl who knows and I went to school with Eva Kneeland. Eva had a lovely mother but Eva knew everything and she used to point them out to me. They had the most stylish rigs in town and they used to drive by. That's where I learned who some of them were.

M: Did you ever see Tillie Howard?

W: No, I don't think that I ever did. I do know that there was a Tillie Howard. I also remember that there was an Etta Clark. Now, one of those two women married a man named George Ogden and built a big house on San Antonio Street. There was always a bad little girl who wants to dare anything. Of course, we were never allowed down in that district. I remember that one time, we went to a big party at Mrs. Campbell's; they had a big place and were among the best to do. After the reception, we had hired a horse and buggy from the livery stables for the reception, and after it was over one of the girls suggested that we ride down Utah Street. I didn't want to do it a bit because I had four brothers and they might hear about it. It was the most daring thing I ever did. I could see that there were some handsome houses on it but nothing else. I don't remember when it was that they ran the girls out of there. Someone asked my grandmother where the girls had scattered and she told them that she thought just around the corner. Some of them really got out.

M: Did El Paso go all the way to the river?

W: Yes, pretty much to the river. Many Mexicans lived down there. All of that was called Chihuahueta. I don't know if they still call it that. To get to Juárez, we had to use that little streetcar or we walked across the bridge.

I think that the one in the park now was used on Magoffin Street. They had another streetcar that took people to Juárez but I believe that one was a little bigger than the one in the park. Juárez was real small, but it came pretty much to the river, too. For a long time it was much smaller than El Paso. There were beggars all over the streets. There was a lot of poverty there, but there shouldn't be because it is a big flourishing city.

We used to get beautiful silks by the yard, fine perfumes, and nice gloves for about half of what you would pay here. Women wore bustles. My father would have been furious if he had known that a lady who lived here and taught school once took me to Juárez with her. The women used to smuggle a lot. Anyway, I don't know why she took me with her, I was just a little bit of a girl. She bought all these yards of silk and then she pinned them in under her skirt to look like a bustle. She brought all these things home that way. Every now and then, they would search women and they would get into trouble and there would be a big hullabaloo, but she made it this time. My father's strict instructions were for us not to get anything over there that we didn't pay for. I know that women did that a lot.

The men did some, too. Windham likes to tell about the gentleman who was the Senior Warden in the church. He went over to Juárez and filled his tall hat with cigars and brought it back and they searched him and found the cigars. Nobody seemed to think that it was very bad to smuggle. The laws weren't very strict, but we weren't allowed to smuggle anything.

M: I read somewhere that at one time, they tried to make the Mexicans take a bath before they came over here.

W: I can tell you about that. That's when they had a terrible scare about typhus fever. It was supposed to come from the bite of a louse and this old doctor had been bitten and developed the fever and had died. Then my husband became the health officer, Dr. Hugh White. He was a great man to get rid of diseases. He cleaned out all the smallpox so that they never had any more smallpox here. They had always had smallpox and they kept what they called the pest house to keep the patients in. What my husband did was to gather up the Mexicans by the busload and bathed them in disinfectant at the bridge and he wouldn't let anybody come over unless they got a bath. He also got all the Mexicans he could that lived here in El Paso. Because of that nobody got typhus. I remember him coming home and saying, "You know, Mexicans are the gentlest people in the world." He had lived in Virginia where the Negroes were. "If I had tried to take busloads of Negroes, I wouldn't be here now." The Mexicans saw the sense in this and they went.

M: I recall also that every now and then, there would be a big campaign to stop the Mexican women from bathing nude in the river.

W: I don't remember that, but maybe they couldn't get the men to work when the women were bathing.

M: You mentioned that your husband had wiped out smallpox in El Paso?

W: Yes, he did. He just set up a campaign like he did with the typhus. There had always been smallpox and he had the pesthouse. If you had smallpox, you had to take the family member out there for special nursing and hang out a yellow flag and keep the people in your house and not let anyone come near. He said there was no reason for smallpox. He loaded his office with

ivory points about an inch long which had the vaccine on it. All they did was scratch the person's arm. He got everybody in town to do it. Then, he went down among the Mexicans. They were superstitious at the time, many of them, and they wouldn't be vaccinated; they would hide out. An old Catholic priest came to my husband and told him that they trusted him and if he would give him points that he would do it. He did it and that got rid of smallpox for the next fourteen years.

The pesthouse was just a little frame house run by John Conner. He had been a nurse and when the patients went out there it was his job to look after them. The pesthouse was only for smallpox. They called it the pesthouse because that was just how people regarded it, just horrible. It is the most horrible death! I don't know where the pesthouse was located. Probably not very far out, but it seemed far to us in the horse and buggy days.

M: What kind of hospitals did they have then?

W: In the beginning, before I can remember, they had what was called the Ladies Hospital. I have only heard of it. The ladies of the town went down to the hospital in south El Paso and nursed people. They took turns doing it, so it couldn't have been much of a hospital. Then, they tell me there was a house that had been torn down on North Santa Fe Street that was the hospital. But, as I remember it, the first hospital was the Sister's Hospital on North El Paso Street. It was a big two-story house that the Sisters of Charity opened. Later, there was Hotel Dieu. My husband received his medical training at the Medical College of Virginia. He came here about 1905, I think. When he came to this part of the country most of the men who came had tubercular troubles, as he did, but he got well right away.

M: Mrs. White, we have enjoyed talking to you and we would like to come back and talk to you more. We would like to talk to you about the military and the politics and many other things.

W: I remember when Fort Bliss had only one officer. It had been a good sized post but became a company of Negroes and one officer. There was great excitement when a new handsome officer arrived. The post was where it is now. When I used to go stay, I went because Maureen Loughborough's father was there and she was in my grade at school. Before that they had a good many young officers and it was quite gay. We used to go to parties out there and the young men came to the parties in town. Captain Beal's daughter, Nannie, told about their wanting to go to a dance, but they had no way to get out there. They had no money and the hacks to rent were too expensive. So Mike Neff, who married Captain Beal's daughter, told them that since his father owned the ice house that he could get a horse if they could get a buggy somewhere. Mrs. Britton Davis was one of the few rich people in town. She had a carriage, and they broke into her barn and took the carriage and hitched it up to the ice wagon horse and went to the party. They had to pass the ice house and when they got there, the horse didn't want to pass it, but they finally forced him on and they all had a fine time. Mrs. Davis never did know that they had her horse. I don't believe that the young people now know how to have a good time. Everything is so easy for them. They didn't do any harm, they didn't hurt the carriage; they just borrowed it. I wish that you could have heard one of the girls that went tell it. That was one of the funniest things that I ever heard.

Lots of the buildings at Fort Bliss are still standing that were standing then. There were also lots of tents there. The new lieutenant that caused

all the flurry was Julian Dodge. Captain Loughborough was in command of the post. We had no means of conveyance but they had a buckboard there and what they called an ambulance, a seated affair that had seats along the sides. Mrs. Loughborough loved to be with the young people and she would get this ambulance and come to town and get all the young people in it and we would go all over town. They had lots of trouble with those Negroes, but they quieted down after a while. The colonel was a pretty good disciplinarian. It was only with the soldiers that we had trouble; we had a good class of Negroes in town. They worked as janitors and around. The reason that we never had many Negroes was that there were too many Mexicans to do the jobs. Old Tom Grigsby was the janitor in the State National Bank and they have his picture hanging up along side of all the officials. His wife was sort of a midwife. She took care of all the women who were having babies. They were all good cooks, and some of them worked around in the homes, but there wasn't a good many of them.

I wrote a story once about Eva Kneeland for the Colonial Dames, which is an organization to which I belong. All I knew was what Eva told me and she said a very beautiful woman lived in one of those houses on Utah Street named Gypsy Davenport, and as Eva expressed it, "wholely and utterly beautiful." Eva's mother was a very cultivated woman and Eva knew all the big words. So, she told me about Gypsy and I thought that I would give anything if I could see her. Well, there were some beautiful women here but I had never seen anybody who was that beautiful. When the women were ordered to clear out, Gypsy went to some other state, I think that it was Indiana, and nobody heard anything about her. Then one day my brother Maury was sitting

in his office and a nice gentle, little old lady came in and wanted to talk to my father, who had been dead for some years then. She told Maury that he had handled some business for her when she lived here. She said that here name was Mrs. Fitzgerald and she wanted him to help her because she had some property here. Maury sent for my brother Page and Colbert Coldwell, who had just gone into the real estate business. They escorted this little old lady around. By that time Maury had found out who she was. The other two were such gentlemen that he didn't tell them. Then she paid Maury and went on back to where she had come from and he didn't hear from her anymore.

Then one day, a nice young couple came in and said that they had been left some property by their aunt and wanted to see it. Maury told them that he would be very happy to help them. They didn't know who their aunt had been. They said that she had been very prominent. Maury attended to all the business and then learned that they had brought their aunt's body back to buried in El Paso and they wanted a nice funeral with some prominent men to be pallbearers. Maury didn't know what to do but he decided that he was going to fix all those old fellows. So, he called up Mr. Manny Turner, a business man who worked at the State National Bank, and Dr. Jim Braddy, and Mr. Henry Kelly, who had a fine family; he married Elizabeth Kelly who was the librarian. He didn't tell them who she was but he told them that they remembered Mrs. Fitzgerald. Of course they couldn't remember her but he told them to dress in black suits and wear white gloves and that he wanted it to be a nice funeral. They agreed to come and pretend to know who she was. The Episcopal minister spoke and everything went off well. It was a long time before Maury told them who Mrs. Fitzgerald was. He got more fun

out of that. I think that they buried her out at Concordia because I don't think that there was an Evergreen then.

I think that Tillie Howard married George Ogden. He was the son of an old respected German family here who did very well, but he wasn't like them or he wouldn't have married that woman. He was a big, florid looking man who looked like he might just be that type of person. Most of my contemporaries never heard about things like this. The reason that I did is because I didn't have a mother. My mother died when I was two years old. I did have a wonderful father who watched over me the best he could. I had a stepmother but that's not the same as a mother. I used to run around the neighborhood and just listen to people talk, and these other girl's mothers wouldn't let them run around. I didn't go anywhere that wasn't nice but I heard these other people talk and I learned a lot of things that way. One thing I found out was that people didn't like children who asked questions; I didn't ask questions, I just listened. I suppose that I appeared very dumb and they didn't think that I would take things in, so they talked; but I took it all in.

I remember that the little Chinaman's name was Chung Magown. He was past sixty when he died.

There was Mesa Street and Stanton Street, but I guess that Magoffin Street was the main residential street in town. The Krause house on Stanton is one of the oldest here. Our old house on Magoffin is still there but it looks awful now. The Magoffin's house is still there but the grounds have all gone down. Miss Josie is past 90. There is nobody there now but her and her daughter, Octavia, and you don't get servants like you used to.

They had a retinue of servants. As a young lady, Josie was a very pretty girl. Jimmy was a very handsome young man.

Those were great days. I never thought of them as picturesque because people made fun of Texas. We were supposed to be crude people. When I would go east, I used to hate to say I was from Texas because I knew that they would say rude things and make crude remarks. The nice people here weren't crude. You couldn't find more refinement anywhere. There wasn't much of it, but those people clung together. Men didn't want their wives to run around and associate with all kinds of people. I remember that we had a neighbor on Magoffin; they were very good people but very ordinary, not much refinement. The sister was going to be married and we were all invited to the wedding. My stepmother said that she ought to get ready but my father said that he was going and taking me but he didn't want her to go. They were not bad people but they just weren't the kind of people that he wanted his wife to associate with. When she did go out, she went with her own kind.

Our houses were very cool in the summer. Our old house on Magoffin had ceilings that were 12 feet and 5 inches high with a tall shingled roof. We also had shade trees. In the winter, we burned mostly coal. The big rooms with the tall ceilings were cold in the winter. Our coal came by train from somewhere around Gallup, New Mexico. Some of it came from the east and it was awfully expensive, but it was nice to come in and the fireplaces were going. I remember how cheerful it was, but there was lots of work involved.