

[In my first interviews with Mr. Ortiz]

Interview

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Pecos, New Mexico [?]

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Corrections to my manuscript on the Pigeon Ranch Well now owned and advertized by Mr. Tom Greer as the oldest well in the U. S. A.

Information source for this correction of manuscript Teodosio Ortiz of Pecos, N. Mex. HM

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In my first interviews with Mr. Ortiz, I was served with an interpreter who failed to give me the full value of all that Mr. Ortiz had to say on the subject. In my past experiences with old Spanish Americans and Indians I have found it profitable to go over a subject matter several times and thrash out all angles of the subject carefully, however, since my interpreter translated the story of Mr. Ortiz in such precise details, with such an easy flow of competent English, I accepted the work of the interpreter at face value, not realizing that he was omitting some important details as well as making some dates too positive.

Some days ago, when I went over the subject of the Glorieta War with Mr. Ortiz, the subject of the Pigeon Ranch Well came up for comment, and I discovered that my notes were not complete enough, and partially in error. My interpreter on this occasion was not

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so gifted with a beautiful flow of English as the one I had in my first interview with Mr. Ortiz but he was faithful in translating the full text of what Mr. Ortiz had to tell.

In my statement in the manuscript that the Valley Ranch was Mr. Alexander Valle's headquarters ranch and that the Pigeon Ranch was one of his outlying ranches. I was misled by the interpreter as well as in my previous information on the subject, for I had been so informed by several people in and around Pecos. That the Valley Ranch was for / along period Mr. Valle's home ranch is quite correct, and it is also natural that many people who did not know all the facts came to believe it. Mr. Ortiz says that, the Valley Ranch did not become Valle's home ranch until after he sold the Pigeon Ranch, shortly after the Glorieta Battle, of 1862. That from what Mr. Valle told Mr. Ortiz later, he came to the Glorieta country in about 1844 or 45, and that the Pigeon Ranch was his home ranch until a year or two after the War when he sold it to another Frenchman by the name of

Mr. Ortiz says that he did not intend to make it emphatic, as the interpreter gave it to me, that the first digging on the well by men working for Mr. Valle was done in 1851 but that from what he was told it was about that time or at any rate just a few years after Valle / had established himself in the country and was beginning to accumulate a bunch of cattle and sheep. The little streamlet that flowed by the ranch and still flows there was being polluted by cattle and sheep and was often made muddy over long periods when the rains were copious in the summer season. It was this condition that caused Mr. Valle to start the digging of a well in front / of his ranch which he had developed into a sort of Inn for travelers on the Santa Fe Trail. The story of Mr. Valle's early in this section, Mr. Ortiz got from Mr. Valle himself and from neighbors who worked for Mr. Valle over a long period.

The first knowledge that Mr. Ortiz can remember of the well was when he was about five years of age, when he happened to be at Mr. Valle's Ranch and was playing out in front of the house near the little stream. He remembers the hole which was the starting of the well some years previous. The hole was not very deep for one could jump in and climb

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out of it, however it was soon after that event of his playing around this hole that Mr. Valle undertook the completion of the well. In my first talk with him he did not go into all the details / and the interpreter evidently got the wrong impression / and got his first memory of the well, mixed up with the completion of it.

Mr. Ortiz says that he can not be certain of the exact year when Mr. Valle had his men complete the well, but he is sure that it was finished before the war of 1862. The finishing of the Well was done by four men one of the names of whom (he could not recall in his first conversation with me. This work of finishing the well was done sometime between his fifth / and eighth year, and of this final work by Valle's men he has personal memory and knowledge. The first digging and completion of the well was evidently a square hole for when the hole itself was completed it was walled out, log-house fashion, with a pole cribbing, on top of which was mounted a boxed frame with posts, cross-piece and well pulley. The four men who finished the work on the well were: Rafael Lucero, Luis Moya, Antonio Gabaldon, and Crus Cebolles.

In about the year 1866 when Teodosio Ortiz was a boy of thirteen the new owner of the Pigeon Ranch for some reason, decided to remove the pole curbing, somewhat enlarge the well, and wall it out with rock. For this job of enlarging and curbing out with rock, the owner of the ranch hired the two older brothers of Teodosio Ortiz and he as a boy of thirteen assisted his brothers in the work. The final enlarging of the well to its present unusually large dimension was done in 1904 as I have set forth in my manuscript on the well.