

AYER Y HOY en Taos

Yesterday and Today in Taos County and
Northern New Mexico



**ERNEST BLUMENSCHNEIN
AND THE GREAT WAR**
by Robert R. White

PAGE 3

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EDITOR'S PAGE

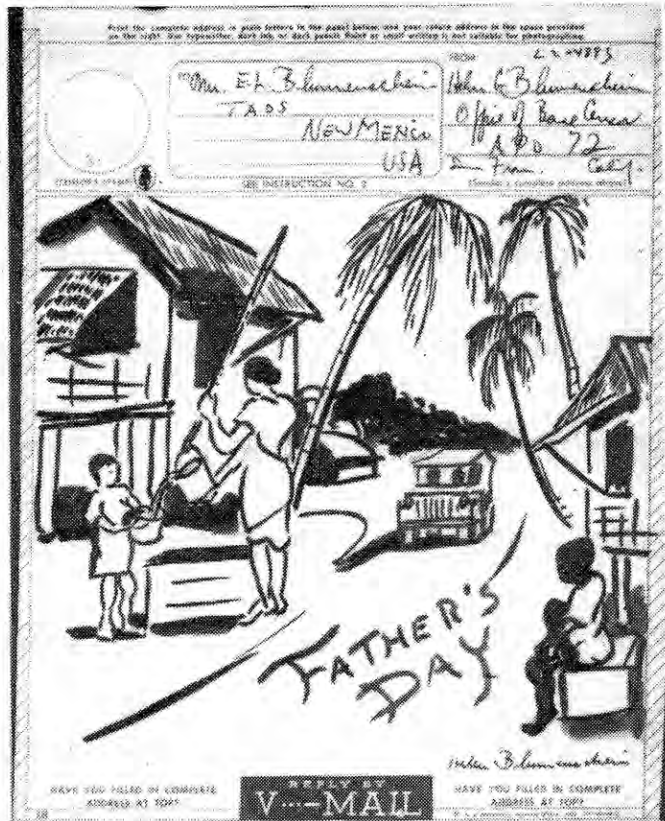
by David L. Caffey

Robert White's article, the feature of this issue of *Ayer y Hoy*, gives us an interesting sidelight to the career of one of Taos' most celebrated artists. While art history often provides a unidimensional account of its subject's artistic career, White, author of *The Taos Society of Artists*, offers a glimpse of Blumenschein interacting with one of the major events of his time.

Actually, service to flag and country seems to have been a family affair with the Blumenscheins. Mary Greene Blumenschein, wife of Ernest, designed the World War II poster which appears on our cover. The original sketch for the poster now belongs to the Kit Carson Memorial Foundation and resides in the Blumenschein Home.

Daughter Helen Blumenschein took a more active part in the latter conflict. As a lieutenant in the Women's Army Corps, she served in Indonesia and the Philippines in 1944-45.

Letters home went by "V-Mail," an army system in which soldiers' letters were photo-reduced for more efficient air transport to the States. Helen evidently took to heart the notion that a picture is worth a thousand words, for she told her parents of her experiences through the sketches she sent. Some thirty-five of the "V-Mail" sketches (reproduced below 90% size) found their way back to the house on Ledoux Street.



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Cover: *DELIVER US FROM EVIL*, World War II victory poster by Mary Greene Blumenschein, 1941.

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ERNEST BLUMENSCHNEIN AND THE GREAT WAR

by Robert R. White

WHEN THE UNITED STATES entered World War I on April 6, 1917, the entire nation mobilized its resources to win the conflict. People involved in the arts contributed to the war effort in a way that is almost unimaginable to those with vivid memories of the Vietnam era. For example, an article in *The Literary Digest* in May 1918 stated that the best painters, sculptors, musicians, and writers in France, England, Italy, and the United States were celebrating in pictures, marble, song, and story the "glory of Freedom's cause."¹

Artists played a special role in this war because of their work on propaganda posters. At this time, posters were probably the primary means by which governments instilled in the public a sense of their war aims.² As was true of everyone, artists were also asked to purchase war bonds in the great Liberty Loans.

Although Taos was geographically far removed from the Western Front, the Taos artists became deeply involved in war work during the summer of 1918. This occurred in great measure because of the involvement of Ernest L. Blumenschein, one of the artists in the group known today as the Taos Ten, who felt that he saw an opportunity for the Taos artists to make a major contribution to the war effort.

Blumenschein embraced war work with great enthusiasm. He wrote to the Committee on Public Information (Division of Pictorial Publicity) offering his services and received an acknowledgment in April 1918 from the chairman, Charles Dana Gibson, addressed to Blumenschein in Taos, thanking him for his offer and stating that "it is good to know that we have such an able [volunteer] now in Mexico [sic]. Blumenschein wrote to the Treasury Department in July 1918, offering to do drawings for publications of the National War Savings Committee. In mid-summer he donated a painting entitled *Good Friday in Paris* to the Committee on Public Information; a month later he requested that this painting be transferred to the Liberty Loan Committee (the painting undoubtedly had a war theme).³

However, what occupied most of Blumenschein's time during the summer of 1918 was the coordination of work on range-finder paintings. These paintings, also known as designation targets or landscape targets, were 50 x 70-inch landscapes of northern France and Belgium that were used in "teaching the men how to find the range, how to estimate distances, how to detect 'cover,' how to designate strategical points, and how to make maps."⁴

Work on range-finder paintings in the United States was begun in February 1918 by the Salmagundi Club in New York; with 400 members, it was the largest art organization in the country. Possibly at the suggestion of a visiting British Army officer, a call went out to the members of the club to paint rangefinders, and nearly 70 artists responded. By June 1918, the Salmagundi Club had formed a War Service Committee and had sent 36 range-finder paintings to army training camps.⁵

Ernest Blumenschein was in New York in early 1918 and participated in war work at the Salmagundi Club, of which he was a member. He returned to New Mexico in early April, stopping in Santa Fe long enough to present a lecture on range-finder paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts.⁶ In Taos, Blumenschein began to organize work on the range finders. Rolls of canvas were obtained through the Salmagundi Club and buckets of house paint were purchased for use by the artists. Blumenschein sent personal letters to the artists in Taos, asking that each pledge a certain number of days for one month to the production of range-finder paintings, but it was eventually to become clear that the responses were not always as enthusiastic as he might have wished.

The *Taos Valley News* reported in early June that Lee F. Hersch had produced the first range-finder painting in Taos.⁷ However, Irving Couse had painted a rangefinder in May while still in New York, and had delivered it to the Salmagundi Club before leaving for New Mexico. There is a possibility that Blumenschein may have done likewise.⁸

It was almost mid-July before work began in earnest on the range-finder paintings. Burt Harwood offered his large studio for this work, and within two weeks, 15 paintings had been completed. The *Taos Valley News* described it as "the most important work ever done by the artists of Taos."⁹ The artists who participated were:

Gustave Baumann¹⁰
Oscar E. Berninghaus
Harriett Blackstone¹¹
Ernest L. Blumenschein
Paul Burlin
Ethel Coe¹²
W. Herbert Dunton
Leon Gaspard
Lee Hersch
Bert Phillips
Joseph Henry Sharp
Mrs. J.H. Wilson¹³
John Young-Hunter
Walter Ufer

Blumenschein wrote to the Salmagundi Club from Taos, probably in late June 1918, suggesting that the Taos artists send the rangefinders that they painted directly to the western training camps, rather

than lose the time required to have them distributed from New York. Charles M. Fairbanks, the corresponding secretary of the Salmagundi Club, responded affirmatively on July 4 and suggested that Blumenschein write directly to the commanding officers of Camp Funston, Kansas, and Camp Cody, New Mexico (near Deming). This he did, and requests for range-finder paintings were soon received from the army camps. On August 27, 1918, Blumenschein was appointed special western representative of the War Service Committee of the Salmagundi Club.¹⁴

Before the range-finder paintings were sent to the army training camps, however, they were taken to Santa Fe and were displayed from July 30 to August 31 in the fourth annual exhibition of the Taos Society of Artists at the Museum of New Mexico. The public took more interest in the rangefinders than they did in the main exhibit of southwestern landscapes and portraits. One reviewer noted that because the rangefinders were of the same size and had a common theme, viewers could more easily differentiate between the styles and techniques of the artists. The public liked these paintings as art, and "felt instinctively the sentiment of unselfish patriotism which prompted the artists to give their best effort for utilitarian war purposes."¹⁵

In the midst of all this, Ernest Blumenschein sat down and wrote a long report to the *American Art News*, describing in detail some of the problems he had experienced in the range-finder work. The pertinent paragraphs, printed under the heading, "Art News From Summer Colonies," were as follows:

The readers of the Art News should know that although 2,000 miles away from the Atlantic Ocean, Taos is close to the war, and the artists here have been helping the soldier boys by producing range finders for Camp Funston and Camp Cody, and have received letters expressing great appreciation for the pictures from the commanding officers at the camps. As Chairman of the Range Finder Committee out here, and having had the experience of organizing our war work, I would like the Art News to give space to these few words in relation to this subject. The great fight is a much, very much, bigger cause than the production of beautiful art works.

I make this statement, which a month ago I would not have thought necessary, because of my experience with painters in the last few weeks. Out here the war work was hardly thought of a month ago. The men were wrapped up in their paintings, in the usual course of a summer's labor, some, in their supreme egotism, feeling that their genius should be unhampered; others in plain selfishness, simply painting because they loved to paint; others producing "pot-boilers" for the winter's

market. So when we sent out a call, a private letter to each painter asking him to pledge himself to so many days for one month, and in those days to produce range finders for the Western camps, we began to see that the painter, with a few exceptions was not so anxious to help with his metier, and really sacrifice some of his precious summer days for the benefit of the men who were willing to sacrifice their precious lives. The responses were very slow in coming. One artist said (and it is actually the most outrageous example of egotism I ever encountered) that "he considered his work more important than the war!" Another said he had given this and that and had painted a range finder back East, owned Liberty Bonds and had given generously to the Red Cross, all of which I knew to be true, and now he was going to work for himself until next winter, when he would again help in war work.

But the war isn't waiting until next winter and the soldiers must be developed. And so I hope that other artists who have reasoned the same way may see this letter, be moved to contribute a range finder, and realize, as Gen. Johnston has said, that it will be of "inestimable value to us in our musketry and machine gun instruction," and realize also that with their hands and brains and talents they are actually of great service in winning the war.

The Taos painters came around beautifully in the end, and inside of two weeks we had 15 completed canvases, 50 x 70, landscapes and village scenes of France, which are now on their way to help lick the Kaiser.¹⁶

When copies of the *American Art News* containing Blumenschein's article arrived in Taos, the result was a general sense of outrage among the other artists. A special meeting of the Taos Society of Artists was called on September 27 to protest the article, "which reflected most unpleasantly on the patriotism and attitude of our members, towards their activity in war work." All of the members present, Irving Couse, Herbert Dunton, Walter Ufer, Julius Rols-hoven, J.H. Sharp, Victor Higgins, and Ernest Blumenschein, drafted a letter to the *American Art News* requesting the publication of a second letter by Blumenschein explaining his first letter. Blumenschein stated that he had no malicious intent, but had simply wanted to emphasize the importance of the range-finder work by showing that no excuses of personal or business difficulties could match the need to do everything possible to win the war.¹⁷

All through the summer of 1918, artists worked with the commanders of army training camps to try to furnish training material that was thought necessary for the war effort. Finally, on September 25, 1918, a letter was sent to the Salmagundi Club from the Ordnance Department of the Army, officially noting the production and



Ernest Blumenschein with a group of range-finder paintings in Burt Harwood's studio in July 1918. The painting at far left on the floor is by Harriett Blackstone; at center on the easel, by Walter Ufer; half hidden on the floor in front of Blumenschein, by W. Herbert Duntton; and on the easel at far right, by Blumenschein. Hanging from the balcony railing, at the center, is a painting by Oscar Berninghaus, and to the right of it is a painting by Gustave Baumann. Photo courtesy Museum of New Mexico (negative No. 15604).

use of range-finder paintings, and promising a full review of the situation by the General Staff.¹⁸ No further correspondence occurred, or was necessary, because within a few weeks, on November 11, 1918, the Great War was over.

The painting of rangefinders by American artists and their use in army training camps has been a forgotten episode in American history.¹⁹ One reason for the paucity of information is that few, if any, of these paintings have survived.²⁰ We would not even know exactly how they were used in training were it not for Captain Cornelius. J.R. Cornelius was a military instructor at Princeton University in 1918, and he wrote a magazine article about the use of range-finder paintings.²¹ Although Cornelius describes the use of these paintings to train recruits to find the location and range of potential enemy emplacements, he also reveals that the paintings were set up on rifle ranges and were used as targets. The soldiers were instructed to elevate their sights so that the bullets would strike blank sheets of paper above the paintings, but given the lack of marksmanship skills usually exhibited by new recruits, it seems likely that the paintings were shot full of holes.

NOTES

1. "The Dreamers Awake," *The Literary Digest* (May 11, 1918), p. 29.
2. Richard Melzer and Phyllis A. Mingus, "Art to Crush the Kaiser--World War I Poster Art in New Mexico," *El Palacio* 88 (Spring 1982), pp. 21-28.
3. Blumenschein's correspondence on these activities is contained in the Blumenschein papers, Archives of American Art (AAA) microfilm roll 269, frames 41, 45, 47, 48, 50, and 55.
4. P.A.F. Walter, "New Mexico in the Great War, IV: 7. Art, Drama, and Literature in War Service," *New Mexico Historical Review* 1 (October, 1926) p. 417.
5. Salmagundi Club records, AAA microfilm roll NY SCL, frames 558, 559, and 581-584.
6. Walter, "New Mexico in the Great War," p. 417; *Taos Valley News*, April 16, 1918. The author would like to thank Virginia Couse Leavitt for furnishing copies of the *Taos Valley News* related to this subject.
7. *Taos Valley News*, June 4, 1918. Lee F. Hersch (1896-?) was a Cleveland artist who went to Taos in late 1917. After his range-finder work, Hersch joined the army.
8. A dated sketch for a range-finder painting still exists in one of Couse's sketchbooks (this information courtesy of Virginia Couse Leavitt).
9. *Taos Valley News*, July 30, 1918.
10. Information on most of the artists listed is available in the many books on the Taos art colony, and further identification will not be made here. The exceptions are Lee Hersch (see note 7) and the artists listed in the following three notes.
11. Harriett Blackstone (1864-1939) was a New York artist who spent the summer of 1918 in Taos. Reference Doris Ostrander Dawdy, *Artists of the American West*, Vol. II (Chicago: The Swallow Press, 1981), p. 30, and *Who's Who in American Art*, Vol. 1, 1936-37, p. 47.
12. Ethel Coe (1880-1938) was a Chicago artist who devoted most of her life to teaching. She spent a number of her summers painting in New Mexico; she painted in Taos possibly as early as 1915. Reference Doris Ostrander Dawdy, *Artists of the American West*, Vol. III (Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press, 1985), p. 89 and *Who's Who in American Art*, Vol. 1, 1936-37, p. 91.
13. Mrs. J.H. Wilson's given name was Cordelia, but no other information has been located.
14. Blumenschein papers, AAA microfilm roll 269, frames 42, 43, 44, 46, 49, 52, and 54.
15. Paul A.F. Walter (?), "Fourth Annual Exhibit of Taos Society of Artists," *El Palacio* 5 (August 10, 1918), pp. 82-91.
16. *American Art News*, September 14, 1918. The article and subsequent letters were printed in Robert R. White, *The Taos Society of Artists* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), pp. 107-111.
17. White, *The Taos Society of Artists*, pp. 32, 108-111.
18. Salmagundi Club records, AAA microfilm roll NY SCL, frame 594.
19. The author received letters from the Department of the Army's Center of Military History, the National Museum of History, and from three different branches at the National Archives, all stating that no information could be located regarding range-finder paintings. Contemporary text books on rifle training, such as Major Townsend Whelen's *The American Rifle* (New York: The Century Co., 1918), likewise contain no mention of the use of range-finders.
20. It is possible that some range-finder paintings have survived without their present owners being aware of their original purpose. A painting by Dunton, entitled *The Range Finder*, was illustrated in a 1940 publication, suggesting that it had survived to that time and may still be in existence. (*Representative Art and Artists of New Mexico* [Santa Fe: School of American Research, 1940; reprint edition, New York: Olana Gallery, 1976] p. 14).
21. J.R. Cornelius, "The Value of Landscape Targets," *Scribner's Magazine* 64 (October, 1918), pp. 433-440.

THE CHILI LINE FROM ANTONITO TO TRES PIEDRAS

by John Comstock

THE "CHILI LINE" RAN from Antonito, Colorado to Santa Fe, New Mexico between 1887 and 1941. It was part of a line that was intended by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad to stretch from Denver to Mexico City.

In an early burst of energy, the line's builders laid rails from Denver to Antonito by March, 1880. By July, the line had reached Tres Piedras. By 1881, the line was operational as far south as Espanola, and it eventually reached Santa Fe, far short of the intended destination of Mexico City.

The Antonito-Tres Piedras run, or the northern end of the Chili Line, began operating in 1881 and ran for 61 years, primarily serving as an original shipping point for loads of livestock and lumber.

For those who care to take to the back roads and byways and look for them, there remain a few remnants of the Chili Line between Antonito and Tres Piedras. Starting from Antonito and driving south on U.S. highway 285, it is possible to see the grade in several places, and to locate the ruins that remain.

PALMILLA STATION - Palmilla Station, the first stop out of Antonito, once boasted a thirty-two car siding capacity, a frame section house, privy, coal house, and a rough-hewn log bunk house. In 1891 these assets were valued at \$1,530 by the Denver and Rio Grande.¹ A foundation of large lava stones from nearby volcanic deposits remains today as evidence of the section house. Another interesting feature is a deep, stone lined cistern. The cistern was filled with water hauled in on rail tank cars. As the first station out of Antonito, Palmilla Station sometimes attracted extra business from residents who preferred to haul their freight a little farther in carts to take advantage of the lower charges for northbound goods.

The site of Palmilla Station is 10 to 11 miles south of Antonito. A rough dirt track leads a few hundred yards off the highway to the east to the ruins of Palmilla Station.

VOLCANO - The highest station on the Chili Line was Volcano, at 8,487 feet. The station had a nineteen car siding capacity. No buildings are known to have existed; none are indicated in the railroad's 1891 list. Volcano Station is about 7 miles south of Palmilla, probably west of the highway.

SKARDA - The original Skarda was 2 to 3 miles south of Volcano and about one-half mile west of the highway, near Forest Road 87. By 1930, the original settlement, with its store and post office, had been moved south and east to New Skarda.

New Skarda may be reached by way of the Manville and Sibrico mines' large road of pearlite. West of this road, a large fill is visible on the old road grade. New Skarda was about 400 yards south of this point.

In 1941 a rider described New Skarda as a "lonely stop with side track and post office in a little store."² Mail was thrown off the train in a sack; the train scarcely slowed. Howard Haines is said to have owned and tended the store. After the railroad ceased operation, he moved it to No Agua, but after a few years that town lost its post office, and the store was closed.

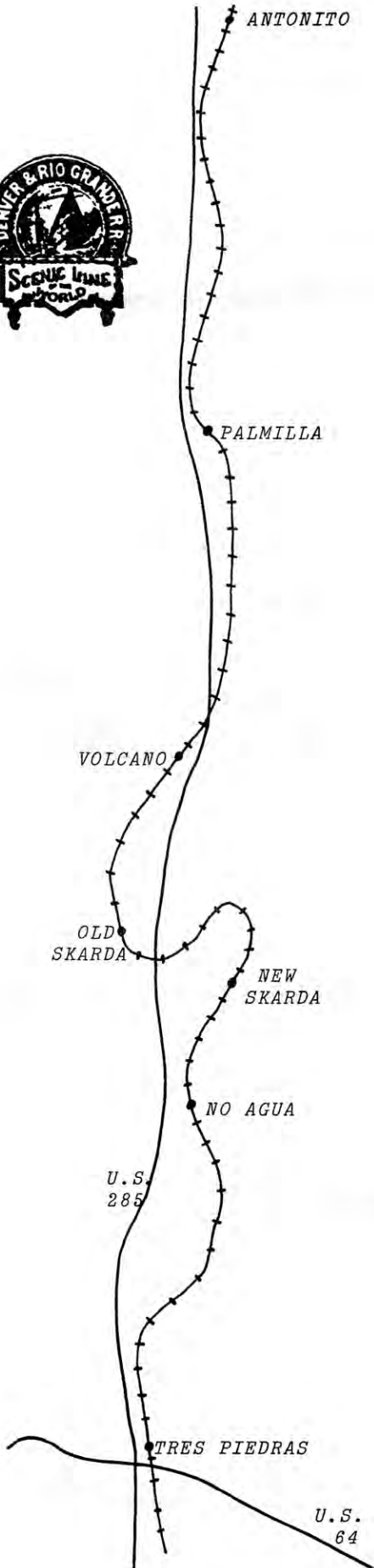
What gave rise to old and new Skarda was homesteading after World War I. Vets from "back east" homesteaded in the area between 1918 and 1922; however, only fifteen percent of available land at most was ever homesteaded, according to Clarence Quinlan of Antonito, who ranched in the area for over 50 years.³ A few years of high precipitation had caused too-high hopes; by 1935 hardly any homesteaders remained from Taos Junction up to Skarda.

Between old and new Skarda, the railroad looped curiously two miles to the east, one to the north, and then back south, in order to maintain grade down the Skofield Escarpment. Since 1939 the highway has cut directly through the rim showing eras of volcanic activity in the stripes of the earth. Returning to the highway from Manville, one can go south through this cut. Three miles south of Manville junction is a tiny graveyard, just south of the Pearlite plant and 200 yards east of the highway. Nearby is the foundation of No Agua section house.

NO AGUA - According to the railroad's 1891 list, No Agua had all frame buildings. There were a section house, bunk house, two privies, and a coal bin, plus water tank and Haliday wind mill; these assets were valued at \$3,195. The stop had a twenty-two car siding capacity. By the 1930s mail was picked up here by the train from a hoop. The station was a flag stop.

George Smith, resident farmer, remembers those days.⁴ He recalls that small dwellings were built in town by Hispanic farmers so that their children could attend the little No Agua school during the winter. These farmers had homes, lands, and gardens in the hills. In season, they laid by supplies of dried produce; as it was needed in winter, they made trips to fetch the food on homemade skis. There were also many World War I homesteaders in the area. By World War II, almost all of the residents had left the area.

No Agua's church was moved to Tres Piedras in about 1955, after standing vacant for years. Its most recent use appears to have been as a Chevron Station and bottle shop. About 100 yards south of the church's foundation, No Agua's little school has fallen in around its flagpole.



NEW MEXICO BRANCH.

SOUTHWARD TRAINS		TIME TABLE		NORTHWARD TRAINS	
FIRST CLASS		No. 26		FIRST CLASS	
No. 11.		January 15, 1954		No. 12.	
Accom.		STATIONS		Accom.	
		Passing Places.			
7.15 Pm	Dep	Denver	Ar	7.10 Am	
11.40 Am	150 P M	Antonito	Ar 27.8	3.00 Pm	
12.35 Pm	41	Palmilla	Dep 29.2 11.4	2.20	
12.55	64	Volcano	29.7 6.9	1.50	
1.35	31	No Agua	30.3 9.2	1.10	
2.05	56 P M	Tres Piedras	31.3 7.2	12.35 Pm	
2.50	70	Servilleta	32.3 9.5	11.55 Am	
3.40	33	Caliente	33.3 12	11.05	
4.30	164 P	Barranca	34.6 8.6	10.25	
5.40	18	Comanche	36.6 7.1	10.00	
6.10	114 P M	Embudo	38.1 4.8	9.30	
6.55	54	Alameda	39.1 3	8.50	
7.50	42	Chamita	41.4 4.5	8.30	
8.40 Pm	78 P M Ar	Espanola	Dep 43.1 4.7	8.00 Am	
(7.00)			(91.2)		77.00

In 1881, a rail traveller reported that he had "quite a good dinner" and good water in No Agua.

TRES PIEDRAS - The only depot building on the northern end of the Chili Line was at Tres Piedras. Its water tower is the most visible remembrance of the Chili Line on the Mesa today.

In 1891, the railroad listed a four room depot, two platforms totalling 2,520 feet in length, a privy, a coal house, a coal shed, two water tanks, a pump house, and a Holiday wind mill as the stations assets. These were valued at \$3,980. The stop had a twenty-eight car siding capacity.

The Chili Line is deserted today, but old time residents still remember when their lives were affected by the railroad. Mr. Quinlan recalls that in 1939, heavy snows at Thanksgiving threatened to kill his sheep around Pot Mountain. Quinlan and his helper drove toward Skarda in an attempt to come to the aid of the sheep, and their truck got stuck. By chance, the operator of a bulldozer cutting through the Skofield Escarpment was nearby. Quinlan asked the man for help in clearing a path to the sheep. As men and machine crushed through the snow, Quinlan thought of the tank crews fighting in Europe, and felt that he had tasted something of their experience. A path was made and the sheep were brought safely back to No Agua. There they were picked up on the Chili Line. The locomotive charged at the snowdrifts and carried men and sheep to Antonito and safety.

NOTES

1. John A. Gjevre, *Chili Line: The Narrow Rail Trail to Santa Fe* (Espanola, New Mexico, 1969) p. 82.
2. Forest Crossen, "Narrow Gauge to Santa Fe," *Trains Magazine*, September, 1941.
3. Clarence Quinlan, interviewed by the author and Diana Baker, Summer 1985.
4. George Smith, interviewed by the author and Diana Baker, Summer 1985.
5. Lansing B. Bloom, ed., "Bourke on the Southwest, XII," *New Mexico Historical Review* XII:4 (October, 1937), p. 341.



BOOK REVIEWS

Brett: From Bloomsbury to New Mexico. A Biography. Sean Hignett. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984. First United States publication 1985 by Franklin Watts, Inc. Pp. 299. Illus., notes, biblio., index.

ANYONE WHO HAS FOLLOWED the adventures of "The Brett" and the Lawrences in New Mexico will want to read this latest addition to the literature of the trio, to say nothing of Mabel Dodge Luhan and other contemporaries.

Written with the cooperation and encouragement of the Esher family, this volume adds much to what we know of the earlier life of Brett: her sheltered existence in a titled family, whose members made little effort to understand "Doll;" her years at the Slade School of Art, and her misadventures as a member of the Bloomsbury group.

Brett met Frieda and D.H. Lawrence in 1915 and he invited her to join his utopian colony called "Rananim," which he proposed to set up in Florida. But, it was not until 1924 that she made the move. By then, Lawrence had picked New Mexico in which to locate his group, and Brett was his only convert.

All the well known accounts of bickering, pettiness, jealousies, and backbiting are here, as well as new material, thanks to the Esher family, who made available diaries, journals, letters, and an unpublished autobiography penned by Brett. Also, further light is thrown on Brett's emotional relationship with Katherine Mansfield and her first affair with John Middleton Murry at the age of forty. It is essentially Brett's book. The focus is on her.

Sean Hignett, the English-born author of this volume, wrote a first novel titled, *A Picture to Hang on the Wall*, that became a cult novel of the 60's. He subsequently received the D.H. Lawrence Fellowship from the University of New Mexico in 1970. One of the stipulations of the award was that he live for the summer at the Lawrence Ranch. Thus began his interest in Dorothy Brett and the start of his research project. He met Dorothy Brett in 1977, about three months before her death.

Sean Hignett made several trips to Taos over the years, and his observations about the place and the people are sharp and amusing. For example, when he was interviewing Taosenos about Brett: "In Taos so many people had taken Brett out to lunch at least once a week that I began to wonder at the number of lunch hours in the New Mexico calendar." The photographs and color illustrations are excellent. Mr. Hignett has done a good job, but the correct spelling of "posole" evaded him.

Mildred Bruder Buchanan
Taos

Russell Lee's FSA Photographs of Chamisal and Penasco, New Mexico. Ed. by William Wroth. Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, co-published with The Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1985. Pp. x, 139. Illus., notes.

Russell Lee's FSA Photographs is an important work because it documents a lifestyle which has virtually disappeared.

Throughout the eighteenth century northern New Mexico developed into an agrarian society of small, self-sufficient communal farm villages. Residents engaged in subsistence agriculture, the raising of livestock, handicrafts, and barter. The people in each village were usually related as members of a large extended family. They were linked by their mutual needs, the *Compadrazgo* social system, and the Catholic religion. The remnants of this frontier society were captured by Lee in his photos.

The quality of the pictures is excellent, due to Lee's impeccable skills as a photographer and his ability to put people at ease in front of his camera. This is especially remarkable considering that he was a stranger to his subjects.

Lee's plates depict a proud, strong, and non-materialistic people who, on the whole, were satisfied with their lot in life. It is quite obvious that traditional values were deeply engrained in the close-knit extended family units that are portrayed. The people were God-fearing and hardworking, as exemplified by the photos of religious rites, processions, and farming. The life of these people was probably difficult, yet simple. Their dependence on the land is apparent. The livelihood of the people was based on agriculture and an egg-and-butter economy. The independence of character that resulted from the self-sufficient economic units is also captured by Lee's portraits. The photos of woodworking, needlework, and plastering adequately depict the unique skills which these pioneer people had mastered.

The book is important not only because it portrays a lifestyle which had survived for more than two centuries in northern New Mexico, but because the pictures were taken as the villages embarked on a transitional period on the eve of World War II (1939-40). The people in these villages today do not depend primarily on subsistence farming for their livelihood, and the communities are no longer self-sufficient.

In summary, the book serves its purpose. Russell Lee, in conjunction with contributors William Wroth, Charles L. Briggs, and Alan M. Fern, accomplished the objective of providing documentation on the traditional Hispanic communities; specifically, Chamisal and Penasco. We can probably assume that life in Ranchos de Taos, Questa, or Tierra Amarilla was not much different at that time. The work is an excellent photo documentary, although some of the captions may be a bit misleading. Indeed, if a picture is worth a thousand words, then this work serves the purpose of several books.

Bob Romero
Taos

A Woman's Quest for Science: Portrait of Anthropologist Elsie Clews Parsons.
Peter H. Hare. Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1985. Pp. 167. Illus., notes, index.

TAOS READERS WHO EXPECT revelations concerning the time that Elsie Clews Parsons spent at Taos Pueblo will be disappointed by this biography. Author Peter Hare, a grand-nephew of Parsons and philosophy professor at SUNY-Buffalo, mentions her 1936 publication, *Taos Pueblo*, only briefly in passing, noting that she ultimately asked her Taos friends (including Mabel and Tony Luhan) to ignore the monograph because of the furor it had caused in Taos and because she had not revealed any secrets since she had been privy to none. Neither is this book intended as an in-depth survey of her field work or early anthropology in general.

Readers who are interested in personalities will enjoy the book, as will those who appreciate early models for pacifism, feminism, and deep commitment to social causes. The author does not dwell so much on Parsons' accomplishments as he does on her ability to have her unpopular views heard, if not respected, in the early 20th century because of her wealth, social prominence, and academic achievements. To avoid, as he says, "the speculation of psychobiography," his commentary is limited and most of the book is composed of direct quotations from Parsons' own letters and publications. This kind of biographical presentation is both overly detailed and shallow, especially when presented by a relative, and requires that we trust the ordering of the quotations to form our picture of the subject.

From her early writings on social welfare to what were considered scandalous thoughts on "trial marriages," to her field work in Mexico and the U.S. Southwest, to her term as the first female President of the American Anthropological Association, Parsons is here presented as a complex person very far ahead of her time both sexually and socially. This is the theme of the book, and will cause the reader to either read on or say, "So what?"

For students of the Southwest, the survey of her work at Hopi, Acoma, Jemez, Isleta and Taos Pueblos is illuminating because the author provides more commentary than in other sections of the book. Parsons' monumental output, discipline in work habits, and interest in ethnographic detail are still respected today by anthropologists although her historical speculations and lack of rigorous methodological approaches were criticized even in the 1920's and 30's.

Elsie Clews Parsons may not have succeeded in her "quest for science" by modern standards, but she did attain many satisfactions and milestones according to her own. Perusal of the first few pages will inform most readers of their decision to continue their own quest in this publication, or not.

Arthur H. Wolf
Taos

Oscar E. Berninghaus; Taos, New Mexico.
Gordon E. Sanders. Taos: Taos Heritage Publishing Company, 1985. Pp. x, 140. Illus., Biblio., Catalogue of known paintings, index.

BEGINNING WITH a noncommittal foreword by a St. Louis museum director, and continuing with a text that should have been subjected to professional editing, this Berninghaus book does manage to convey much of interest about the artist's life. The photographs show a quiet, cultured man who fits the image of one who was beloved by many in Taos. Wearing the suit and tie which was the at-work uniform of many of the early artists, he appears to be a gentleman comfortable both with himself and with his art.

While the art career of Berninghaus was neither meteoric nor international, it was marked by steady success, beginning early in his life with strong family support. He forged an impressive career in St. Louis, first as an illustrator, and later in fine art. While neither he nor his fellow Taos Society of Artists members have yet received the critical attention from art historians that they deserve, his popularity, as demonstrated by today's commercial art market, continues to grow.

The book does not contain much analysis of "Bernie's" work, but two things are apparent. One is that Modernism had no impact on him. The other is that the slickness and tightness in handling paint which plagues so many commercial artists turned fine artists was not a great problem for him. His sweeping landscapes, such as *Taos Country*, are among the best realistic paintings of the area. Despite his limited art study, his best work is highly competent and his Romanticism for Taos is truly felt and expressed. Berninghaus succeeded in creating art which was distinctively American in flavor. He would have been proud to know that his admirers think this of him today.

It unquestionably is the large number of color reproductions and the marvelous historic photographs that make this book a treat for Western Art lovers. It is not the text. In his presentation of material, Gordon Sanders unexpectedly jumps from one time and subject to another without apparent cause. Of greater concern is his quoting of phrases and sentences without giving sources or attribution, a frustrating and irritating habit.

Despite this approach, which makes the work a loving family memorial to a fine man, and not an art history, it is a visually beautiful book and, given its low price, a good bargain for Western Art book collectors. Barbara Brenner is to be highly commended for putting this project together, so that we can now see in one place the best work of Oscar Berninghaus.

David L. Witt
Taos

SECOND IN A SERIES: THE KIT CARSON MEMORIAL FOUNDATIONPRESERVATION NOTES:IGLESIA DE SAN MIGUEL LEVELLED

The church of San Miguel in the small southern Taos County community of El Valle was demolished last fall following months of debate over its restoration.

The El Valle Foundation, organized to work for the preservation of New Mexico's historic churches, plans to continue its efforts, and has already assisted in a successful project for the church at Cordova, near Chimayo. Harold Joe Waldrum has given the Harwood a copy of his videotape, *La Iglesia de San Miguel en El Valle: The Story and the Requiem*. The half-inch format tape is available for check-out from the library.

Father Jose Maria Blanch, Pastor of the Holy Family Parish of Chimayo and vicinity, has requested the Historical Society's assistance in repairing the Church of San Jose in Las Trampas. The church has received an engineer's report on two large cracks in the church, and repairs are estimated at \$6,500 to \$7,500. The church hierarchy finds itself in a difficult position, caught between a need to concentrate its resources on current ministries of the church and an inherited responsibility in preservation of buildings which have become historic and artistic treasures.

The Friends of Taos Valley, now inactive, has spent some \$800 over the past three years to assist in repairs for the Kit Carson Cemetery in Taos. In one of the last major projects undertaken by Sam Buchanan, the group purchased materials for reinstallation of some of the headstones, as well as improvement of the grounds.

SIX HONORED AT BRUNCH

Six current and former Taos residents were honored for their contributions to the preservation and illumination of Taos history on the occasion of the Society's holiday brunch, December 1, 1985.

Nat Flores, Hattie Trujillo, and Jenny Vincent, the *Trio de Taos* were honored for efforts in collecting, performing, and recording traditional Hispanic music of northern New Mexico. Guadalupe Baca Vaughn was recognized for her work in collecting and sharing music and folklore of Hispanic New Mexico. Taos Mayor Phil Lovato was honored for his research and writing on the *acequias*, and Ila McAfee Turner for her faithful portrayals of Taos life.

The Kit Carson Memorial Foundation maintains a variety of materials centering on the history of Taos and north-central New Mexico. The collection is housed in the Foundation's Center for Historical and Anthropological Research in the old Taos morada, off Las Cruces Road. Materials may be used in the Research Center, by appointment. Available resources include the following:

The Research Library - The library is comprised of over 4,300 volumes, plus many periodicals. The Historical Section makes up three quarters of the library, with many volumes and a number of important series on Taos and Southwestern history, Hispanic history, the fur trade, famous personalities, and other topics of regional interest. Historic preservation and historical museums are other topics covered in the collection. The Anthropological Section offers over 1,000 volumes, plus journals and bulletins of the Bureau of American Ethnology, on the ethnography and ethnohistory of Southwestern Indians and on Southwestern archaeology.

The Photographic Archive - With over 11,400 images, the Photographic Archive provides a detailed view of the Taos Valley from the late 1800's to the present. Most of the collection is concentrated between the 1890's and the 1940's.

Tape Archive - The tape archive contains over 100 tapes of speakers at the Taos County Historical Society meetings and other gatherings, as well as radio talks and interviews featuring famous Taosenos like Long John Dunn and Ernest Blumenschein.

Map Collection - This collection includes some 600 maps of historical interest. Many are reproductions of early maps of New Mexico and the Southwest. Others reflect the results of research by local archaeologists and historians. Included are transportation, environmental, land status, and U.S.G.S. maps, including some early quadrangle maps.

Personal Collections - Among the Foundation's resources are several personal collections, such as the Phil Lovato Collection on the history, development, and management of northern New Mexico acequias and water systems, and the Jacob Bernal Collection on Taos and Hispanic history.

Personal Files and Papers - The Foundation maintains files on historic personalities and institutions of the area. Such files include documents, articles, manuscripts, and personal papers. Notable in this regard are papers relating to Simeon Turley, Ferdinand Maxwell, and Kit Carson.

In addition to these resources, the Kit Carson Memorial Foundation has several staff members who are happy to be of assistance within their individual areas of expertise.

--From information provided by Jeffrey L. Boyer, Curator of Anthropology

MRS. E. MARTIN HENNINGS, 1893-1985

A Remembrance by Robert R. White

HELEN HENNINGS, the wife of early Taos artist E. Martin Hennings, passed away in Chicago on August 13, 1985, at the age of 92 years. Her husband was a member of the Taos Society of Artists, and Mrs. Hennings had vivid memories of the early days of the Taos art colony.

Helen Hennings (nee: Otte) was born in Chicago on May 9, 1893. She attended public school and business college in Chicago, and in 1914 she began to work for the exclusive Chicago department store, Marshall Field & Company. In 1924, when Helen was assistant art buyer for Marshall Field's, Martin Hennings had a one-man show at the store.

Mrs. Hennings recently told this writer (in February, 1985) how she happened to meet her future husband. She walked into the gallery to see the show early one morning and stopped to look at a painting that particularly appealed to her. (The painting was entitled *In New Mexico* and is illustrated on page 117 of Mary Carroll Nelson's book, *The Legendary Artists of Taos*.)

No one other than Martin was in the gallery, and after he had walked over to her, she said, "Oh, what a beautiful painting."

Martin replied, "I'm glad you like my work. If it wasn't on loan [from Carter Harrison] for this exhibition, I would give it to you."

Helen smiled but said nothing, and walked out of the gallery. They did not see each other again that year, but Martin began courting her when he returned to Chicago from Taos in 1925, and they were married on July 20, 1926. They went on a 16-month honeymoon to France, Spain, Spanish Morocco, and Italy, and then settled in Taos in early 1928.

Martin died in 1956, but Helen remained in Taos until 1979, at which time she moved to Chicago to be near her daughter. Mrs. Hennings was in relatively good health until just a few weeks before her death, and she maintained a keen interest in assisting art historians in the study of her husband's work.

Her passing came just 6 months before the 100th anniversary of her husband's birth. Martin Hennings was born on February 5, 1886, and the centennial of this event will be celebrated by the Stark Museum of Orange, Texas, with the opening of an exhibition of their large and important collection of his work. The Museum of New Mexico, which has an important collection of Hennings' early work, is planning a retrospective exhibition for late 1986.



Martin and Helen Hennings at her mother's home in Chicago on their wedding day, July 20, 1926. Photo courtesy of Helen Hennings Winton.

PLANS LAID

A January 11 planning and business session at the Harwood Foundation Alcalde Building resulted in an ambitious schedule of activities for 1986. A detailed schedule will be published in March.

The first meeting will be at 2:00 Saturday, March 15, in the conference room at Millicent Rogers Museum. The program, "Adobe Artworks," will be presented by Carmen Velarde and Natalie Friedman. Other features for the year include a look at the early day tourist film, *Adventures in Kit Carson Land*, as well as trips to see area historic churches, trace the old Santa Fe Trail, and possibly to tour Ojo Caliente. A fall program will feature the music and folklore of northern New Mexico.

Also "in the works" is a fall event at the Martinez Hacienda, to include demonstrations of old ways and skills, foods, and perhaps the mountain man's game of "anvil shooting." The event would be a fund-raiser for purchase of a *careta* and other accoutrements to complement the decor of the hacienda.