

Guide to
MS 003
El Paso Police Department collection

Span Dates, 1912-2007
Bulk Dates, 1912-1922

1 foot, 8 inches (linear)

Processed by Michael Reyes

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Donated by James E. Agan.

Citation: El Paso Police Department collection, 1912-2007, MS 003, C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department. The University of Texas at El Paso Library.

C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department
University of Texas at El Paso

Historical Sketch

The El Paso Police Department was formally founded in 1884, though it informally existed prior to that date. The police force was led by city marshals to tame the rough individuals that were attracted to the West. Many early figures in the Department were former Texas Rangers or Roosevelt's Rough Riders. On August 16, 1889, the El Paso City Council appointed T.C. Lyons as the first police chief. In 1909, a report showed a staff of 50 officers. In November of the same year, the department implemented a motor patrol which they referred to as a technological advancement. By January 1916, the department employed 72 officers.

Due to the major growth of the city, Chief T.C. Armstrong divided the city into four districts and had four patrol cars working each of them. In January of 1933, the El Paso Police Department Short Wave Broadcast Station, KGZM, started operating. With the use of the short wave radio officers were readily available to assist in situations. In 1942, the Department placed an advertisement for a full-duty policewoman. However, it was not until 1974 that women graduated from the Police Academy. In 1945, the mayor hired four ex-military "negros" and the Department became integrated. In the 1950s a major fire destroyed most of the Department's records.

In the following decades the Department kept up with technological and tactical methods to keep the citizens of El Paso safe. This included using radar to enforce speed laws in 1955. The Special Weapons and Tactics Unit (S.W.A.T.) team was found in 1972. Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) was established in 1988 and was a program to educate children about the dangers of alcohol and drugs. They implemented the Gang Task Force in 1990 to lower gang related crime, they also assisted the community with presentations on gangs and how to avoid them. The department has also installed video cameras in patrol cars, had training in "less-than-lethal" methods of force, and has maintained high standards to keep up their reputation and to their mission as a department.

Sources:

www.elpasotexas.gov

Daross, James H. *A History of the El Paso Police Department*. MS 55 & 77, History Seminar Papers, University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, Texas: 1953

Planning and Research Section. *El Paso Police Department Innovations and Program Developments*. El Paso Police Department, El Paso, Texas: 1991

Series Description or Arrangement

This collection is made of two series: Photographs and Reports, publications, and other

materials.

Series I: Photographs – photographs and photocopies. Arranged in chronological order.

Series II: Reports, publications, and other materials – reports, souvenirs, manuals, log books, ordinances, maps, and directories. Arranged in chronological order.

Scope and Content Notes

The El Paso Police Department collection, MS 003, dates from 1912-2007. The collection contains materials that document the daily lives of officers, handbooks of rules and regulations, reports about crime statistics, and photographs of police officers and facilities.

The **Photographs** series contains photographs of early officers, chiefs, and other policemen. The photos also document locations of police stations and other facilities.

The **Reports, publications, and other materials** series contains yearly statistical reports and other information about the El Paso Police Department. It also contains handbooks, manuals, and guides to laws, ordinances, and about handling suspects. There is also a log book from the first female detective documenting her daily encounters.

Provenance Statement

The El Paso Police Department collections was donated to the C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department of the University of Texas at El Paso Library by James E. Agan in 1971, March 8, 2016, and April 18, 2016.

Restrictions

None.

Literary Rights Statement

Permission to publish material from the El Paso Police Department collection, must be obtained from the C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, the University of Texas at El Paso Library. Citation should read, El Paso Police Department collection, C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department, the University of Texas at El Paso Library.

Notes to the Researcher

See Also:

James Curtis Warren papers, MS 575

Allen G. Falby papers, MS 149

History Seminar Papers, # 55 and 77

Planning and Research Section. *El Paso Police Department Innovations and Program Developments*. El Paso Police Department, El Paso, Texas: 1991

Container List

Series I: Photographs

Box #	Folder #	Title	Date
1	1	Fire Department	1912
1	2	Portraits of officers of different ranks	1912-1922
1	3	Detective Force	1912-1922
1	4	Group portraits of Police Department	1912-1922
1	5	Patrolmen and Traffic Squad	1917
1	6	Mounted Men	1917-1922
1	7	Policewomen	1921
1	8	Board of directors-El Paso Police Benefit Association	1921-1922
1	9	Photographs from, <i>El Paso Police Souvenir 1918</i>	1918

Series II: Reports and publications

2	1	Souvenir folding postcard	1909
2	2	<i>El Paso's Protective Forces</i>	1912
2	3	<i>El Paso Police Pocket Guide</i>	1914
2	4	<i>Annual Souvenir 1917</i>	1917
2	5	<i>El Paso Police department manual</i>	1917
2	6	<i>Annual Souvenir 1918</i>	1918
2	7	Photocopy of <i>El Paso Police Department Souvenir</i>	1918
2	8	Stop this Slaughter!	1920s?
2	9	<i>Official Synopsis of Traffic Laws</i>	1920s?
2	10	<i>Souvenir 1920</i>	1920
2	11	<i>Souvenir 1922</i>	1922
2	12	<i>The Policeman's Handbook of Law</i>	1926
2	13	Business Directory and street map of El Paso	1926
2	14	<i>Criminal Identification</i>	1930s
2	15	<i>Annual Report 1936</i>	31 December 1936
2	16	<i>El Paso Traffic Directory</i>	1938
2	17	<i>Program Fortieth Annual Convention</i>	1938
2	18	<i>Official Police Jiu-Jitsu</i>	1938

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2	19	<i>Police Department Rules and Regulations</i>	1939
2	20	<i>Criminal Identification and the functions of the identification division</i>	15 January 1939
2	21	<i>Know your money</i>	1943
2	22	<i>Burglary Detection, a practical text</i>	1945
2	23	<i>Annual Report 1947</i>	31 December 1947
2	24	<i>Report to the People</i>	1948
3	1	<i>The Traffic Ordinance of El Paso</i>	1950s?
3	2	<i>Rules and Regulations-Department of Police</i>	1953
3	3	<i>Annual Report 1957</i>	1957
3	4	<i>Annual Report 1959</i>	1959
3	5	<i>Annual Report 1960</i>	1960
3	6	<i>Annual Report 1961</i>	1961
3	7	<i>Annual Report 1962</i>	1962
3	8	<i>Annual Report 1968</i>	1968
3	9	<i>Annual Report 1969</i>	1969
3	10	<i>Annual Report 1970</i>	1970
3	11	<i>Annual Report 1972</i>	1972
3	12	<i>Annual Report 1973</i>	1973
3	13	<i>Annual Report 1974</i>	1974
3	14	<i>Annual Report 1975</i>	1975
3	15	<i>Annual Report 1976</i>	1976
3	16	<i>Annual Report 1977</i>	1977
3	17	<i>Annual Report 1978</i>	1978
3	18	<i>Annual Report 1979</i>	1979
4	1	<i>Annual Report 1980</i>	1980
4	2	<i>Annual Report 1981</i>	1981
4	3	<i>Annual Report 1982</i>	1982
4	4	<i>Annual Report 1983</i>	1983
4	5	<i>Annual Report 1984</i>	1984
4	6	<i>Annual Report 1985</i>	1985
4	7	<i>Annual Report 1986</i>	1986
4	8	<i>Annual Report 1987</i>	1987
4	9	<i>Annual Report 1989</i>	1989
4	10	<i>Annual Report 1990</i>	1990
4	11	<i>Annual Report 1991</i>	1991
4	12	<i>Legacy/History Black Police Officers</i>	2007?
5	1	Virginia Mendez Logbook	25 February 1922- 31 January 1923

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5	2	<i>Municipal Police Administration</i>	1939
5	3	<i>The Police Yearbook</i>	1949