



Introduction

The Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) had a great effect on the security of Texas and other states bordering Mexico. Officially the Mexican Revolution began in 1910, when President Porfirio Díaz could no longer suppress opposition to his thirty-four year rule. Dissent had been building among various social, political, and power groups for years.

At first, these opposition forces were united in their desire to see President Díaz removed from power. However, the Mexican Revolution was complex and lasted a long time. One regime after another was overturned, and so for almost a decade confusion reigned.





The ten year Revolution devastated Mexico.

These images portray some effects of the violence of the Mexican Revolution. Note especially the bottom left image, The Juarez Cemetery, the unburied bodies are Mexican Revolutionaries who were executed. The city in the back ground is El Paso, Texas. Thus Texans were very concerned by the Mexico's instability, and revolutionary violence that created a dangerous and lawless border. These problems often filtered across the border into Texas.



B729 Bodies of Mexican Revolutionists waiting to be buried at A cemetery in Juarez, Mexico El Paso Public Library, 1910-1920



B730 Mexican Revolution-Red Cross El Paso Public Library, 1910-1920

B732 Dead man and cow in the New Mexico desert .Negative B&W 6x6cm El Paso Public Library, circa 1910-1920.



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Texas
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Violence
1910-1920



Wealthy refugees B733 El Paso Public Library, circa 1910-1920.

Throughout the ten years of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) large numbers of Mexicans fled to the safety United States. They left due to the widespread lawlessness, revolutionary violence, lack of security, and societal disruptions.

Refugees arriving at Fort Bliss. B650 negative B&W 6x7.5cm El Paso Public Library, circa 1910-1920



Mexicans flee the violence of the revolution.

Refuges of all social and economic classes fled the carnage and societal disruption of the Mexican revolution. Whether one was wealthy or a poor revolutionary, violence did not play favorites.



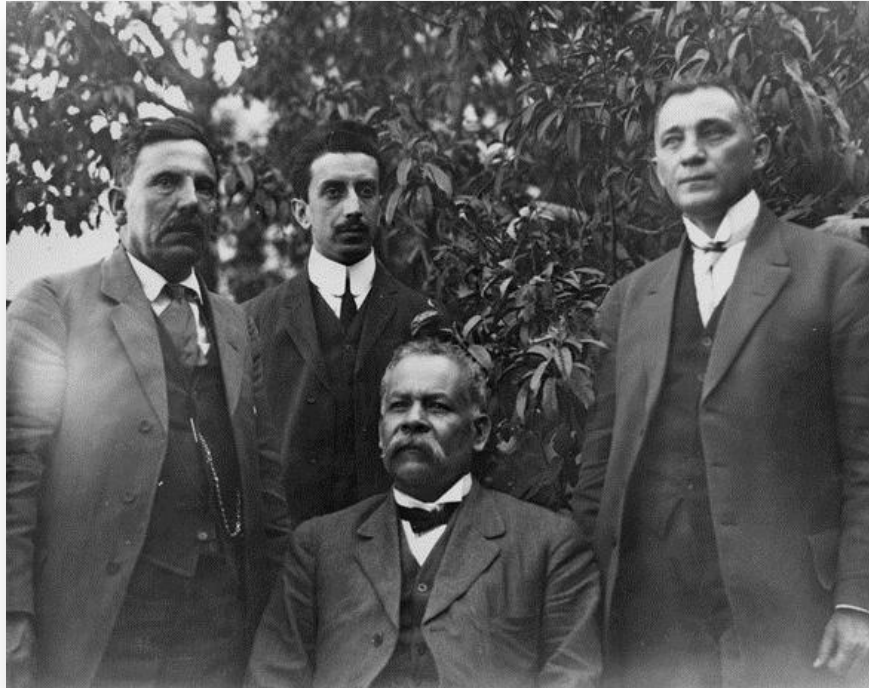
So what did all the bloodshed and conflict of the Mexican Revolution mean for Texas?

It meant that much of the violence and societal disruption occurring in Mexico filtered across the border into Texas. In response to the constant cross border crime and raids, the Texas state government stationed its Texas Rangers along the border. However, there were simply not enough Texas Rangers to effectively police the 1,969 miles long border.

Primary
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The United States and Mexico border is 1,969 miles long.





Emilio Vasquez Gomez seated in the center
B856 Photograph B&W 8x10 in. El Paso Public Library, 1911.

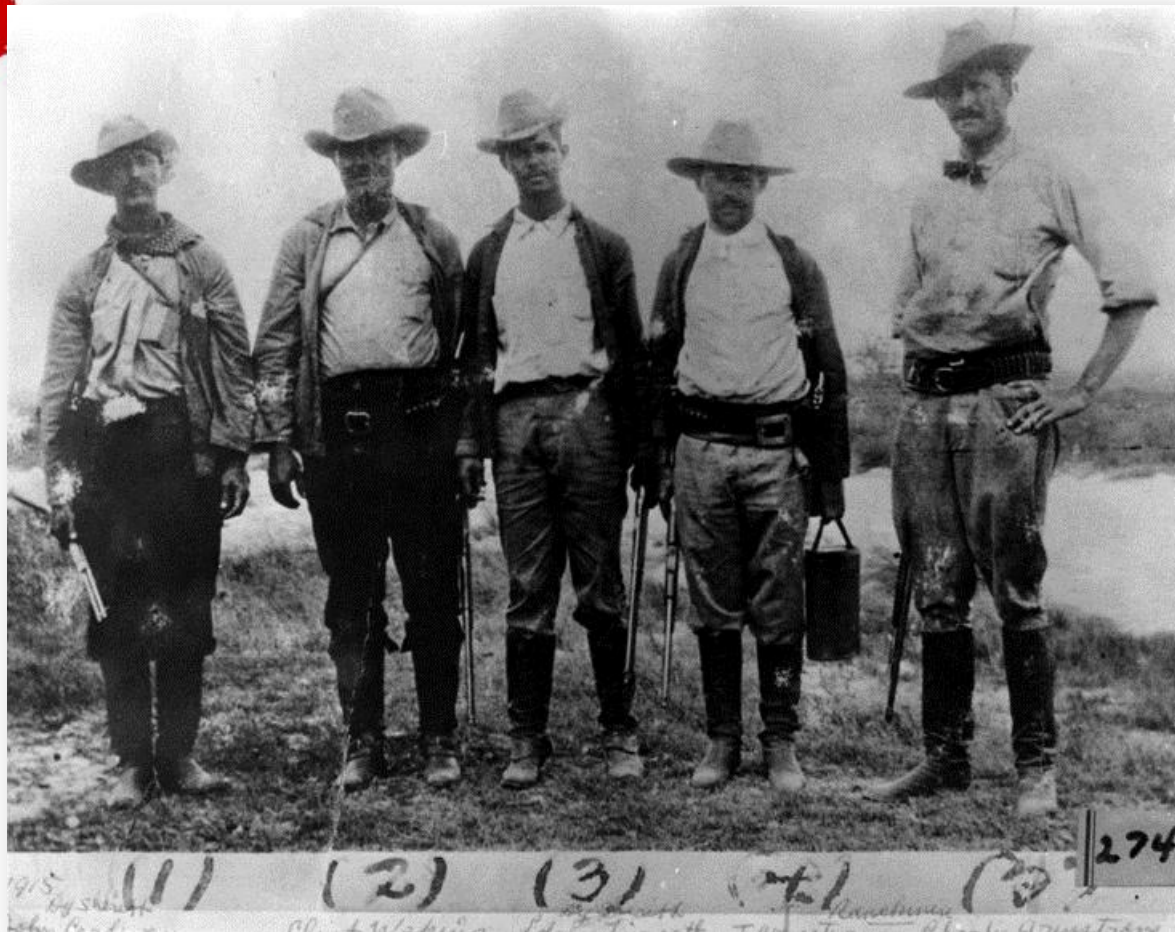
Texas the safe haven.

Texas served as a haven and target for many Mexican Revolutionaries. The constant unrest in Mexico spilled over into Texas with refugees, political exiles, criminals, revolutionaries, recruiters, and financiers.

Emilio Vasquez Gomez, a former Mexican Minister of the Interior and member of the revolutionary party, who had worked closely with Madero and his *Vasquistas* forces until they had a falling out, he then fled to Texas.



Texas Rangers policing the border



In July of 1901 the state Legislature passed new laws which reorganized the Texas Rangers after the passing of the Ranger Frontier Battalion in 1900. The reorganized Texas Rangers purpose was “for the purpose of protecting the frontier against marauding or thieving parties, and for the suppression of lawlessness and crime throughout the state.”

Texas Rangers in 1915. Photographic print: B&W 8 x 10 in.. 1915. Cattle Raisers Museum.

Permalink: <http://texashistory.unt.edu/permalink/meta-ptb-43197>



Disruption of the civil society caused by the Mexican Revolution.



This locomotive and its accompanying cars were the victims of an ambush orchestrated by Villias' men. Often such ambushes meant dynamiting a section of the railroad tracks so the train would be derailed, after which the banditos/revolutionaries would loot the train and eliminate any opposition.

B891 Locomotive ambush, Villa's men. Negative B&W 6x7cm. El Paso Public Library. Circa 1911.



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Villistas in this photograph can be seen riding their horses near a group of parked railroad cars. Trains and Railroads were important strategic resources and targets for the various factions and bandits of the Mexican revolution.

B763a Villistas raising the dust. Photograph 8x10 in. El Paso Public Library, Circa 1910-1920.

The Mexican revolution affected all aspects of life, disrupting the security and sanctity of normal life. As is evidenced by turning this church into a fort.



B B825. Circa 1910 – 1920 (Negative)
Mexican Revolution –Ciudad Juarez, church used as fort by revolutionaries



Banditos attack from ambush.



Mexican revolutionaries or *insurrectos* firing from cover on a knoll. Hit and run attacks and ambushes were common throughout the Mexican Revolution. They were effective and hard to defend against as the attacker choose the time and place of the engagement.

Mexican revolutionaries or *insurrectos*. B809 Negative B&W 5.5x7cm El Paso Public Library. circa 1910-1920



US efforts to secure peace with Francisco 'Pancho' Villa



B671 General Hugh L. Scott with General Francisco Villa meeting in El Paso. B&W negative. El Paso Public Library ,1913.

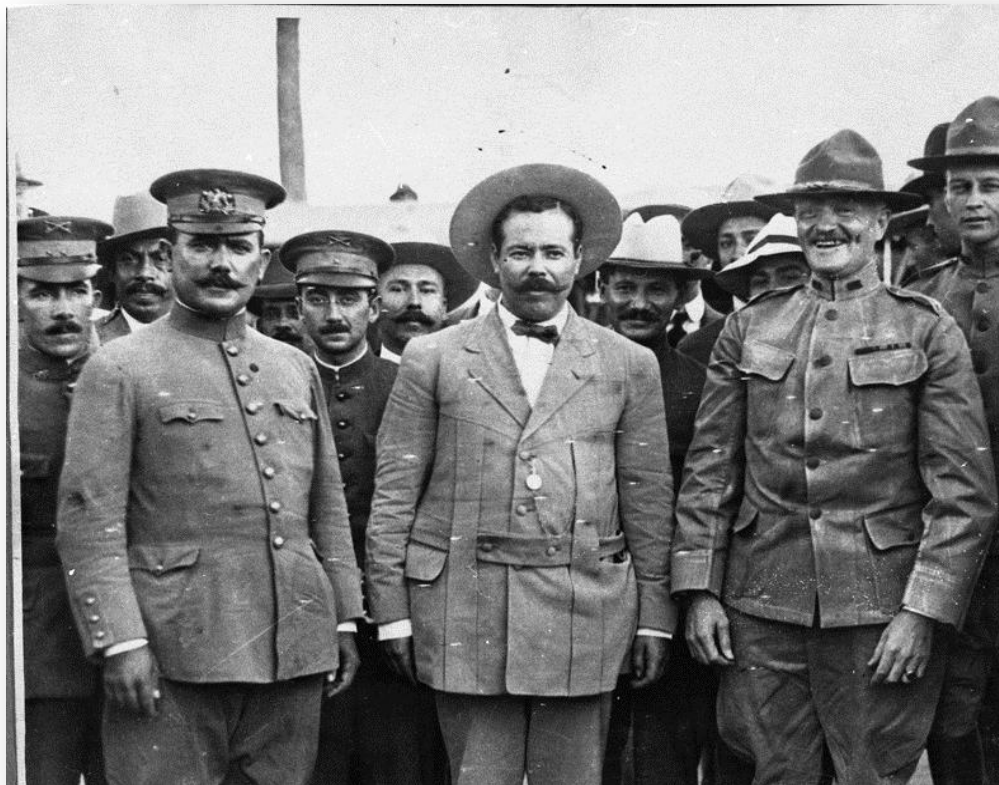
In 1913 President Woodrow Wilson sent U.S. Army General Hugh L. Scott to meet with General Francisco Villa in El Paso, Texas in an attempt to broker a peace between General Francisco "Pancho" Villa and General Venustiano Carranza.



B672 General Hugh L. Scott with General Francisco Villa at the Juarez race track. Photograph B&W. El Paso Public Library, 1913.



The United States attempts to broker a peace agreement between warring Mexican factions



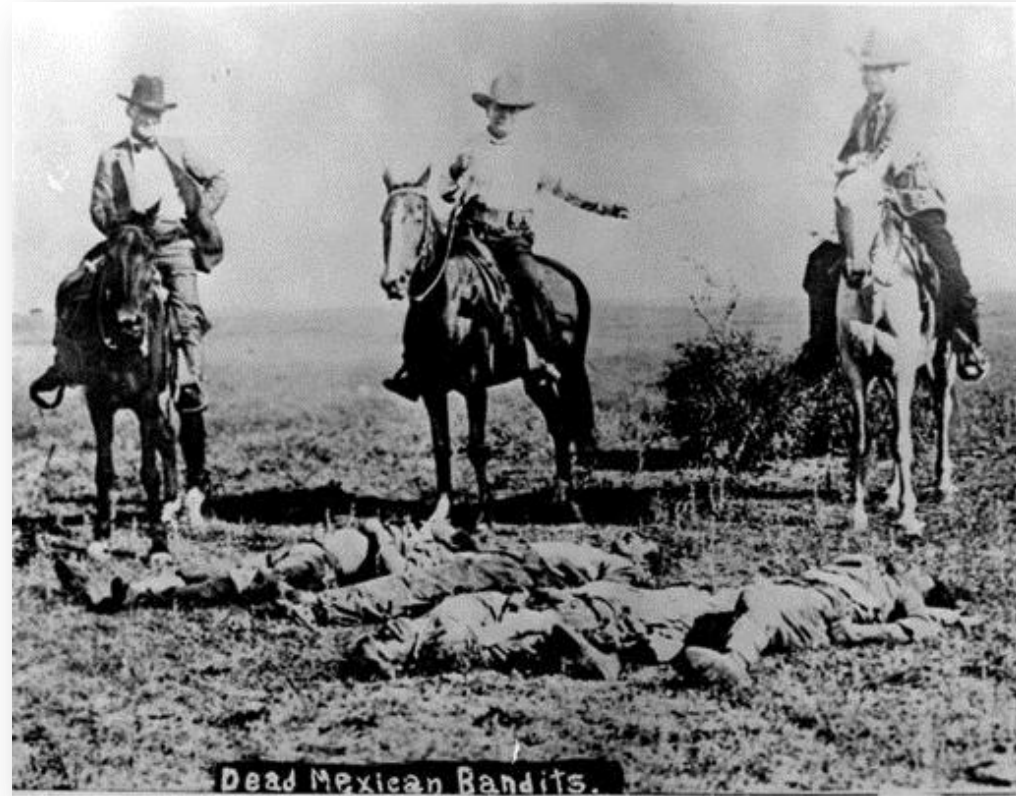
The United States undertook several efforts broker peace agreements between the warring factions in Mexico. None succeeded.

B658. Three Generals.
Negative B&W 4x5 cm
El Paso Public Library,
24 August 1914

24 August 1914 International meeting of Generals – Left to right: General Alvaro Obregon, General Francisco Villa And General John J. “Black Jack” Pershing. The Generals are shown during their meeting on the international bridge shortly after the overthrow of Mexican President Victoriano Huerta. Pershing called the meeting in an effort to stop border fighting and to suggest that the Mexican people stop their internal strife. Two years later after Villa’s raid on Columbus, New Mexico, General Pershing would be ordered to pursue and capture Francisco Villa.



Border Violence



Confrontations with bandits along the border during Mexican Revolution were often violent and fatal.

Texas Rangers with Dead Mexican Bandits. Photograph B&W 8x10 in. Cattle Raisers Museum.
Permalink: <http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph43198/>



For some, the Mexican Revolution meant adventure and/or financial gain.



A small number of Anglo mercenaries and thrill seekers joined the various factions of the Mexican Revolution. Some participated due to their political ideals, others for money and some simply in a quest for adventure.

B799. Mexican Revolution four unidentified men. Photograph B&W 8x10 in. El Paso Public Library , 1916

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Unidentified Texas Rangers. Photograph B&W 8x10 in. Cattle Raisers Museum.
Permalink: <http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph43199/>

In addition to the United States Army the Texas Rangers were sent to border to combat the lawlessness and cross border banditry made endemic by the Mexican Revolution. The highly mobile and experienced Rangers proved very effective. However, combating this problem was beyond the capabilities of the existing number of Rangers. Thus the State Legislature quickly authorized the creation of 'Special' Ranger Forces. These units lacked the training and command structure of normal Texas Rangers, with several companies acting in a vigilante nature. One entire 'Special' Ranger company was dismissed because of such actions.



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B774 Casualties from the
Battle of Celaya. El Paso Public
Library, 1915

This image depicts dead Villistas from the battle of Celaya, 13-15 April 1915. This battle saw Constitutionalist forces (or *Carranscistas*) under the command of General Alvaro Obregon Decisively defeat Pancho Villa's 30,000 troops and his *Division del Norte*, a unit that had gained a fearsome reputation as undefeatable. Villa's losses are estimated at 5,800 killed, 3,000 wounded, and 8,500 taken prisoner. This defeat marked the beginning of a permanent decline of Villa's fortunes and the end of the Conventionist government as Villa's generals and troops began to desert or changed sides. After this battle the U.S. Government officially recognized Carranza as de facto president of Mexico. The *Carranscistas*/Constitutionalist faction would now serve as the foundation of Mexico's new Government. By 1916 Pancho Villa would be reduced to leading several hundred guerillas.

University of North Texas Libraries

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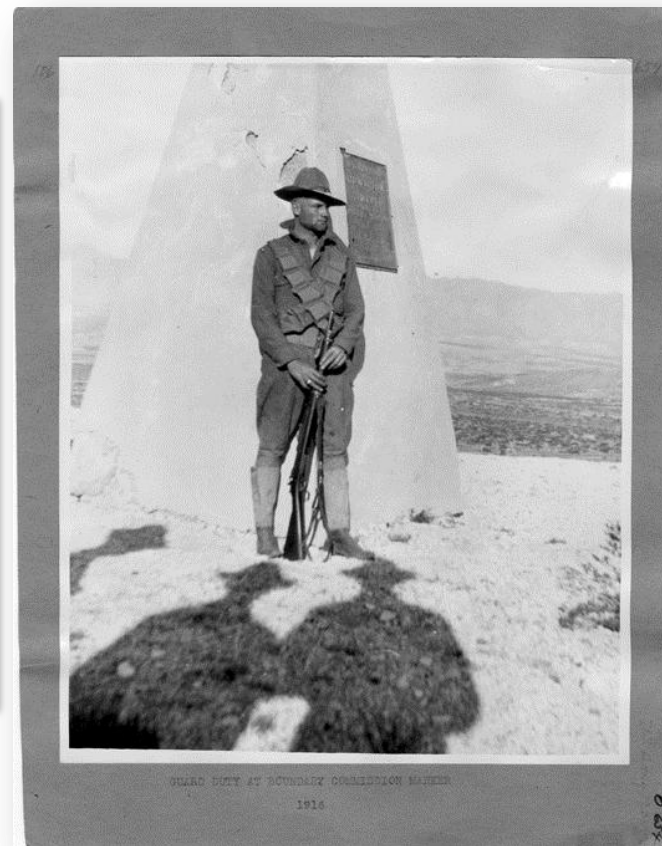
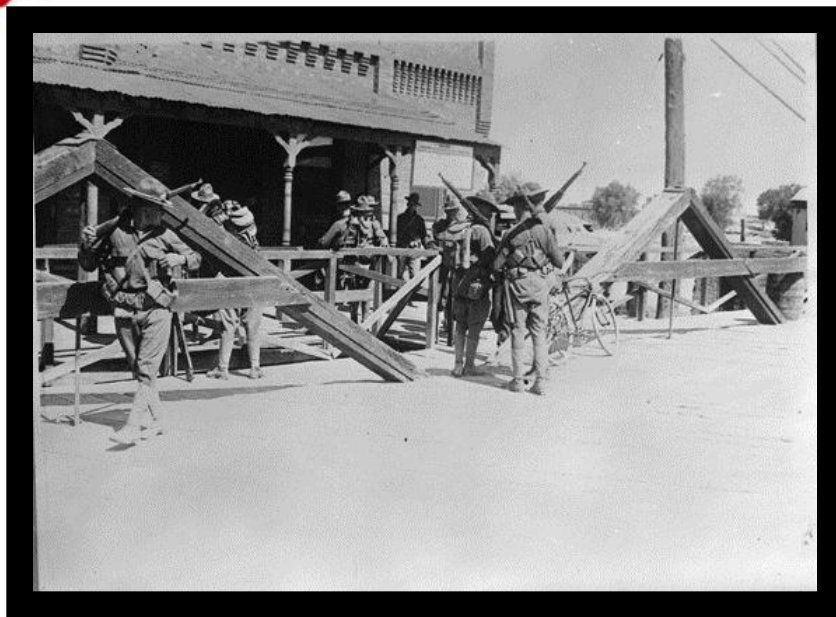


B843 Negative B&W 5 x 3.5 El Paso Public Library, Circa 1912

Senator turned General Venustiano Carranza, arriving in Ciudad Juarez. Carranza was the leader of the *Carranscistas* /Constitutionalist faction. He would ultimately become President of Mexico in 1917. His administration adopts the modern Constitution of Mexico.



The U.S. Army aids in patrolling the border.



Guard Duty at the boundary commission marker- A soldier stand duty at one of the International Boundary Markers along United States/Mexico border. B654 El Paso Public Library, circa 1916.

B715 American Troops on guard duty at the Santa Fe Street Bridge in El Paso, Texas. negative El Paso Public Library, 1916



Marching across the vast landscape the Army attempts to secure the border.

As can be seen from these images the crossing the Rio Grande River into the open expanses of West Texas or Northern Mexico was not difficult whether mounted or on foot. These images also convey a sense of the scale of the border and landscapes of Texas and Mexico.



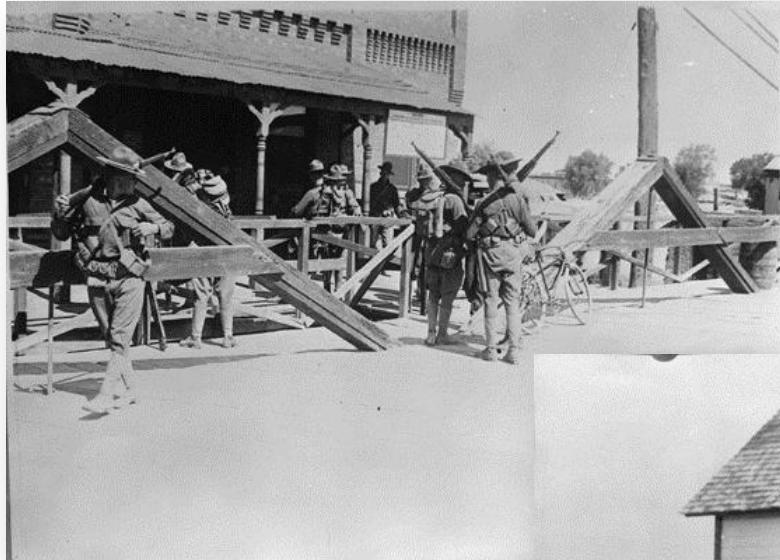
US infantry crossing the Rio Grande. B716 Photograph B&W 8x10 in. El Paso Public Library, 1919.

US Calvary crossing the Rio Grande. B720 Negative B&W 6x7cm. El Paso Public Library, 1919.



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**U.S. Army troops and residents
protecting the city of El Paso.**

Troops from the 24th Infantry U.S. Army troops patrol the Santa Fe Street Bridge in El Paso, Texas in 1916.



B715 Army Guards on the Santa Fe St. Bridge Negative B&W 8.5 x12.5cm, El Paso Public Library.

B733a Columbus, New Mexico citizen Guard. El Paso Public Library, 1910-1920.

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Left to Right General George Bell Jr., Lieutenant Charles B. Moore, and Lieutenant Conger Pratt, of the Infantry, ADC. The image suggests they are discussing tactics and strategy after Panocho Villa's raids on Columbus, New Mexico. ELPA_B666_01 El Paso Public Library, circa 1916.

The U.S. Army reacts to bandit attacks.

21 May 1916 Colonel Frederick W. Sibley, commanding officer of the 14th Cavalry and Major George T. Langhorne Commander of 1st Battalion of the 8th Cavalry are shown discussing tactics to be employed in the pursuit of the Mexican bandits responsible for the raid on Boquillas, Texas. Negative El Paso Public Library, 21 May 1916.

