



## **GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS TELL A GOOD STORY**

Dorothy Ormes  
Government Documents & Maps Librarian  
New Mexico State University  
Federal Depository Library Conference, Arlington VA  
October 19-21, 2009

## **Two Grant-funded Projects**

**Celebrate Community: 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the  
New Deal Arts Project - Fall, 2008**

**Soul of a People: Writing America's Story -  
Spring, 2009**

**Principal Investigators:  
NMSU Librarians, Mardi Mahaffy & Sylvia  
Ortiz**



## **NMSU GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS RESOURCES: WPA FEDERAL ARTS PROJECT**

Illuminating the legislative history  
behind the Federal Arts Project  
American Memory: Online resources  
from the Library of Congress



## **BASIC TIME-LINE OF DEPRESSION ERA ARTS INITIATIVES**

Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) organized  
on December 8, 1933  
Federal Emergency Relief Act, May 12, 1933  
Treasury Relief Art Project (TRAP) 1934 - 1935  
Works Progress Administration (WPA)/Federal  
Arts Project (FAP) 1935 - 1939



## **Tracking New Deal Legislative History**

NMSU's Branson Library holds a wealth of historical record that makes this possible.

- Individual New Deal Documents (print)
- Catalog of Government Publications (print)
- United States Statutes at Large (print)
- Congressional Record (print)
- Congressional Serial Set (print & online)



## **NMSU Library Print Holdings**

### **Highlighted Document:**

**Public Works of Art Project. Report of the assistant secretary of the Treasury to Federal Emergency Relief Administrator, December 8, 1933-June 30, 1934. Doc #T 1.30:R 29**

This document is the original report that contains photos of the art work with a regional breakdown. Arizona/New Mexico is Region #13. Two of the photos are of the work of New Mexico/Colorado artists.

*See the original document on display in the Branson Library*



PUBLIC WORKS OF ART PROJECT

REPORT

OF THE  
 Assistant Secretary of the Treasury  
 TO  
 Federal Emergency Relief Administrator

DECEMBER 8, 1933-JUNE 30, 1934

Region No. 13.—ARIZONA AND NEW MEXICO

ARIZONA

Name	Address	City
Baumgartner, Creston F.	2422 East Willeta Street.	Phoenix.
Colby, Will W.	R. F. D. No. 7, box 500.	Do.
Cory, Kate T.	508 Pioneer Drive.	Prescott.
Fon, Jade.	Flagstaff.	Flagstaff.
Henninger, Joseph Morgan.	Box 469B, route F.	Phoenix.
Holmes, Harriet Morton.	Route no. 7, box 405.	Do.
Kropla, Emery T.	Route no. 2, box 156.	Do.
Marlow, Lucy Drake.	Care of Miss May Nobel, 104 Holly Street.	Do.
McGrew, Edna P.	Flagstaff.	Flagstaff.
Megargee, Lon.	Route no. 1, box 1264.	Phoenix.
Norton, Louise R.	346 Speedway.	Tucson.
Roca, Stella M.	1018 North 7th Avenue.	Do.
Scott, J. Glen W.	2118 West Washington.	Phoenix.
Thomas, Marjorie H.		Scottsdale.
Voris, Mark H.	415 East 2d Street.	Tucson.
Williams, How A.	809 Myrtle Avenue.	Tempe.

NEW MEXICO

Abeyta, Emiliano.	U. S. Indian School.	Santa Fe.
Adams, Kenneth.	Ranchos de Taos.	New Mexico.
Appleton, Mrs. Carolyn Ten Eyck.	205 Delgado Street.	Santa Fe.
Archuleta, Tony.	U. S. Indian School.	Do.
Bab.	Do.	Do.
Barrows, Charles.	Box 333.	Do.
Bauman, Gustave.	409 Camino de Las Animas.	Do.
Berninghaus, J. Charles.		Taos.
Biattram, Emil.		Do.
Black, La Verno.		Do.
Burk, William Emmett.	728 Galisteo Street.	Santa Fe.
Cassidy, Gerald (deceased).	922 Canyon Road.	Do.
Chapman, Manville.	132 South 6th Street.	Baton.
Choss, Alina.	U. S. Indian School.	Santa Fe.
Connelly, M. Ruth.	Sunmount.	Do.
Corson, Stanley B.	837 Son Cuberto Street.	Do.
Cowboy, Nellie.	U. S. Indian School.	Do.
Dasburg, Andrew.		Do.
Davey, Randall.	Canyon Road.	Do.
Delgado, S., Jr.		Peecos.
Delgado, Francisco.	503 Canyon Road.	Santa Fe.
De Romero, Esquipula Romero.	1731 West Central Avenue.	Albuquerque.
Dunton, W. Herbert.		Taos.
Dunton, Nellie G.	Hillside Avenue.	Santa Fe.
Ellis, Fremont F.	Box 342.	Do.
Emery, Irene.	634 East Garcia Street.	Do.
Fleck, Joseph A.		Taos.
Gabolson, Gregorio.	Care of Wm. P. Henderson, 555 Camino del Monte Sol.	Santa Fe.
Garrison, Alfie J.		Do.
Grant, Blanche C.		Taos.
Grant, Gordon.		Santa Fe.
Gulbranson, Warren.	534 East Garcia.	Santa Fe.
Gutierrez, Lela.		Espanola.
Halstead, John E.	Gutierrez, Evangelio, box 169.	

New Mexico and Arizona were in Region #13

Our Lady of Light by  
Region 13 artist (New  
Mexico): Jose Dolores Lopez



"OUR LADY OF LIGHT."



## Online U.S. Congressional Serial Set, 1817-1980

NMSU's newest Government Documents  
resource

Database coverage: 1817 - 1980

"The U.S. Congressional Serial Set is an incomparably rich, yet largely untapped collection of **primary source material** detailing all aspects of American history.."

-- <http://www.readex.com/readex/product.cfm?product=9>

## Basic information to find and use the online Serial Set



The screenshot shows the NMSU Library homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the NMSU logo and the text "New Mexico State University". Below this, there is a search bar with the text "Search for articles, books & more" and a "Go" button. The main content area is divided into several sections: "Information", "Research", "Services", "Collections", "About Us", and "Ask Us!". A large image of the library building is featured in the center. On the right side, there are sections for "Library News", "Special Features", "Helpful Links", and "NMSU Libraries at:". The footer contains contact information for the library.

New Mexico State University Library | Box 30006, Dept. 3475 | Las Cruces, NM 88003-8006 | (575) 646-2932 | [Email the library](#)



The screenshot shows the "Articles, Books, Journals and more" page on the NMSU Library website. The page features a search bar at the top with the text "Search for articles, books & more" and a "Go" button. Below the search bar, there is a section titled "Articles, Books, Journals and more" with a note about remote use availability. The main content area is divided into two columns: "Article Indexes - By Name" and "Article Indexes - By Subject Area". The "By Name" column contains a list of article indexes, with "U.S. Congressional Serial Set. 1817-1980" highlighted. Below the list, there are buttons for "Go There", "Describe", and "Describe ALL". The "By Subject Area" column contains a dropdown menu with the text "... Please Select ...". A blue callout box with white text says "Scroll to and highlight title. Then choose 'Go There.'". The left side of the page has a sidebar with navigation links for "Information", "Research", "Services", "Collections", "About Us", and "Ask Us!".

**Article Indexes - By Name**

- Teacher Reference Center
- Techstreet Standards
- Toxicology Abstracts
- TOXLINE
- Turfgrass
- Ulrichs Periodical Directory
- U.S. Congressional Serial Set. 1817-1980**
- Water Resources Abstracts
- Web of Science (citation indexes)
- Wildlife & Ecology Studies Worldwide
- Wilson Select (full text articles)
- World Almanac

**Article Indexes - By Subject Area**

... Please Select ...

Go There Describe Describe ALL

**Electronic Journals**  
publisher

**Articles on Reserve**

- Paper
- Electronic

**Newspapers**

Scroll to and highlight title. Then choose "Go There."



**Readex** ARCHIVE OF AMERICANA  
**U.S. CONGRESSIONAL SERIAL SET**  
Home > Archive of Americana > Search View My Collection | View My Searches

Search:  in Citation Text  
AND  in Title  
Full Text:   
Serial Set Vol. No.:  Vol. Part:   
Date:  Search

Limit to:  Tables  Maps  Illustrations  
[Simple Search](#) | [Publication Search](#) | [Bill Number Search](#)

Browse by: [Subjects](#) | [Publication Category](#) | [Standing-Committee Author](#) | [Congress](#)

View More Subjects: [Armed Forces and Conflicts](#) | [Discovery and Exploration](#) | [Economics](#) | [Education](#) | [Environment, Energy and Natural Resources](#) | [Food and Agriculture](#) | [Geographic Names](#) | [Government and Politics](#) | [Groups of People, Professions, etc.](#) | [Health](#) | [Indian Affairs](#) | [Infrastructure, Transportation, etc.](#) | [International Affairs](#) | [Legal System](#) | [Names of Acts](#) | [Personal Names](#) | [Publishing and Communication](#) | [Safety, Accidents and Disasters](#) | [Science and Technology](#) | [Social Issues](#)

**Armed Forces and Conflicts**

- Aberdeen Proving Ground (12)
- Ackia (Battle of, 1736) (6)
- Adairsville (Battle of, 1864) (4)
- Advance on Little Rock (U.S. Civil War, September-October 1863) (2)
- Aggression (83)
- Air bases (423)
- Air Force officers (45)
- Air Force personnel (12)
- Air warfare (33)
- Aircraft carriers (35)
- Alamo (San Antonio, Tex.) Siege, 1836 (2)
- Albemarle Sound (Battle of, 1864) (2)
- Aldie (Battle of, 1863) (1)
- Algiers (Battle of, 1816) (1)
- Allatoona (Battle of, 1864) (2)
- Irish Bend (Battle of, 1863) (1)
- Israel-Arab War (1948-1949) (4)
- Italian-American internment in the U.S. (1942-1945) (2)
- Italo-Ethiopian War (1935-1936) (3)
- Iuka and Corinth Operations (U.S. Civil War, September-October 1862) (2)
- Iuka Siege (1862) (3)
- Ivy Mountain (Battle of, 1861) (1)
- Jackson (Battle of, 1863) (3)
- Jackson Barracks (5)
- Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign (U.S. Civil War, March-June 1862) (2)
- Japan Squadron (2)
- Japanese-American internment in the U.S. (1942-1945) (27)
- Jefferson Barracks (36)
- Jenkins' Ferry (Battle of, 1864) (2)
- Jerusalem Plank Road (Battle of, 1864) (2)
- John Brown's Raid (1859) (4)

From here it is possible to search by keyword (Depression), search within a specific Congress (such as 73<sup>rd</sup> Congress), find a specific Act (Federal Emergency Relief Act, 1933). With some delving and cross-referencing with other materials in the Government Documents Department, it is possible to search out the legislative history for historic Congressional decisions.

**Readex** ARCHIVE OF AMERICANA  
**U.S. CONGRESSIONAL SERIAL SET**  
Home > Archive of Americana > Search View My Collection | View My Searches

Search:  Federal Emergency R in Citation Text  
AND  Federal Emergency Relief Act in Title  
Full Text:   
Serial Set Vol. No.:  Vol. Part:   
Date: 1933 Search

Limit to:  Tables  Maps  Illustrations  
[Simple Search](#) | [Publication Search](#) | [Bill Number Search](#)

Browse by: [Subjects](#) | [Publication Category](#) | [Standing-Committee Author](#) | [Congress](#)

View More Subjects: [Armed Forces and Conflicts](#) | [Discovery and Exploration](#) | [Economics](#) | [Education](#) | [Environment, Energy and Natural Resources](#) | [Food and Agriculture](#) | [Geographic Names](#) | [Government and Politics](#) | [Groups of People, Professions, etc.](#) | [Health](#) | [Indian Affairs](#) | [Infrastructure, Transportation, etc.](#) | [International Affairs](#) | [Legal System](#) | [Names of Acts](#) | [Personal Names](#) | [Publishing and Communication](#) | [Safety, Accidents and Disasters](#) | [Science and Technology](#) | [Social Issues](#)

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U.S. Congressional Serial Set - Windows Internet Explorer

http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital?p\_sort=YMD\_date%3AA&p\_action=search&s\_page=search=& READEx serial set

U.S. Congressional Serial Set

72nd Congress, 2nd Session  
H.Rpt. 1971  
3 p.

[Extension of time for the expenditure of emergency appropriation for Federal aid highways, February 3, 1933. -- Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed.](#)

Full Citation | First Page | Add to My Collection

3. Serial Set Vol. No. 9682 Session Vol. No. 14 February 3, 1933

72nd Congress, 2nd Session  
H.Doc. 538  
32 p.

[Report of Reconstruction Finance Corporation, October 1 to December 31, 1932, and February 2 to December 31, 1932. Letter from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation transmitting a report covering its operations... February 3, 1933. -- Referred to the Committee on Banking and Currency and ordered to be printed.](#)

Includes: Tables

Full Citation | First Page | Add to My Collection

4. Serial Set Vol. No. 9647 Session Vol. No. 1 February 10, 1933

72nd Congress, 2nd Session  
S.Rpt. 1222  
3 p.

[Amend the Emergency Relief and Construction Act of 1932, February 10 \(calendar day, February 14\), 1933. -- Ordered to be printed.](#)

Full Citation | First Page | Add to My Collection

5. Serial Set Vol. No. 9769 Session Vol. No. 1 March 13, 1933

73rd Congress, 1st Session  
S.Rpt. 11  
2 p.

[Federal emergency relief act of 1933, March 13 \(calendar day, March 29\), 1933. -- Ordered to be printed.](#)

Full Citation | First Page | Add to My Collection

6. Serial Set Vol. No. 9769 Session Vol. No. 1 March 13, 1933

73rd Congress, 1st Session  
S.Rpt. 17  
5 p.

[Emergency farm mortgage act of 1933, March 13 \(calendar day, April 5\), 1933. -- Ordered to be printed.](#)

Full Citation | First Page | Add to My Collection

Job training programs  
Foreign aid  
Federal aid

Geographic Names  
Puerto Rico  
California

Organizations, etc.  
U.S. Federal Emergency Administration  
U.S. Reconstruction Finance Corporation  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
U.S. Public Works Administration  
U.S. Works Progress Administration

Court Cases  
Baltimore National Bank v. State Tax Commission, Maryland (1936)  
Nortz v. United States (1930)  
Johnson v. U.S. Shipping Emergency Fleet Corp. (1930)  
Federal Trade Commission v. Cement Institute (1948)

Act Names  
Federal Emergency Relief Act (1933)  
Civil Works-Emergency

U.S. Congressional Serial Set - Windows Internet Explorer

http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital?p\_product=SERIAL&p\_theme=ssset2&p\_nbid=06DB5BNRM1 READEx serial set

U.S. Congressional Serial Set

S.Rpt. 11

Title: Federal emergency relief act of 1933, March 13 (calendar day, March 29), 1933. -- Ordered to be printed.

< Previous Page | Title Page (Not Numbered) | Next Page > View Full Citation | Download Pages | Print Citation | Export Citation | Add to My Collection

HIGHLIGHTS (n/a)

**Calendar No. 11**

73rd CONGRESS } SENATE } REPORT }  
1st Session } } No. 11 }

FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ACT OF 1933

MARCH 13 (calendar day, MARCH 29), 1933.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. WAGNER (for himself and Mr. COSTIGAN), from the Committee on Banking and Currency, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 812]

The Committee on Banking and Currency to whom was referred the bill (S. 812) to provide for cooperation by the Federal Government with the several States and Territories and the District of Columbia in relieving the hardship and suffering caused by unemployment, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon to the Senate with amendments and recommend that the bill do pass.

STATEMENT

The bill as amended authorizes the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, with the approval of the President, to borrow \$500,000,000, to be used in making grants to the States, Territories, and the District of Columbia for the relief of distress arising out of unemployment. This fund is placed under the control of a Federal Relief Administrator, appointed by the President with the approval of the Senate; and 10 days after the date upon which the administrator has taken office the Reconstruction Finance Corporation is divested of its authority under the Emergency Relief and Construction Act, to approve applications for relief under title I of that act. The unobligated balance of relief funds remaining with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation is also made available for the purposes of the bill.

Here you can view the entire document, view, print or export the citation as well as download pages. Please ask in the Government Documents Department at Branson Library for help with further research.

Note: for earlier Congresses be sure to search our new online resource: American State Papers, 1789-1838



## **Great Depression Road Show: a community event for Las Cruces, New Mexico**

The event which took place on April 4, 2009 was part of a series of events planned to fulfill a grant that had been awarded to NMSU librarians Mardi Mahaffy and Sylvia Ortiz. We collaborated with Branigan Public Library and Branigan Cultural Center, Las Cruces. The hour-long storytelling was a single event in an all day presentation of dancing, quilting, history, food, social customs and oral history collection concerning New Mexico in the 1930s.

## **Creating a storytelling event for the show**

**Slaves, Sidekicks and Healers:  
Women's Stories collected by the  
WPA**

## Finding the stories and involving the community

- Storytellers of Las Cruces – an organization that dates back to the 1920s
- Edited collections of WPA stories:
  - Witch Stories of New Mexico: Folklore of New Spain*
  - Outlaws and Desperados: A New Mexico Federal Writer's Project Book*
  - Women's Tales from the New Mexico WPA: La Diabla a Pie*
  - Drums and Shadows: Survival Studies Among the Georgia Coastal Negroes*
- Library of Congress American Memory collection



## Web Resources from The Library of Congress: American Memory

Two hundred eighteen oral histories that were collected in New Mexico by the WPA during the Depression are available at the American Memory web site from the Library of Congress

-- <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

## WPA Life Histories About the Federal Writers' Project

The Federal Writers' Project materials in the Library of Congress Manuscript Division are part of a larger collection titled *The U.S. Work Progress Administration Federal Writers' Project and Historical Records Survey*. The holdings from Federal Writers' Project span the years 1889-1942 and a wide range of topics and subprojects. Altogether, the Federal Writers' holdings number approximately 300,000 items and consist of correspondence, memoranda, field reports, notes, graphs, charts, preliminary and corrected drafts of essays, oral testimony, folklore, miscellaneous administrative and miscellaneous other material.

Well over one-half of the materials in this record group pertain to the *American Guide*, the sobriquet for the critically acclaimed state guides. The remainder of the material reflects other areas of interest that developed as the project grew in maturity. They include a rich collection of rural and urban folklore; first-hand narratives (called life histories) describing the feelings of men and women coping with life and the Depression; studies of social customs of various ethnic groups; authentic narratives of ex-slaves about life during the period of Slavery; and Negro source material gathered by project workers. In addition, draft publications and intended publications are included. These publications express concern with the direction America was taking and with the preservation and communication of local culture. Titles include *Hands That Build America*, *From These Strains*, *Lexicon of Trade Jargon*, and *Pockets in America*.

The arrangement of the larger collection generally reflects the division of work within the Writers' Project such as material relating to *The American Guide*, Folklore Project, Social-ethnic Studies, and Slave Narratives. Other series are compilations for archival purposes such as administrative papers or Negro studies material. Still others are groups of similar material such as printed matter and the like.

The plight of the unemployed writer, and indeed anyone who could qualify as a writer such as a lawyer, a teacher, or a librarian, during the early years of the Depression, was of concern not only to the Roosevelt Administration, but also to writers' organizations and persons of liberal and academic persuasions. It was felt, generally, that the New Deal could come up with more appropriate work situations for this group other than blue collar jobs on construction projects. To the Administration's liking were plans generated from a series of meetings held in 1934 between Jacob Baker, Harry Hopkins' chief Civil Works Administration assistant in charge of special and professional programs, Henry Alsberg, Baker's assistant, Katherine Kellock, a writer familiar with international and social organizations, and others. The outcome of these sessions was a project for all the "arts," (labeled Federal One), divided administratively by each specialty and headed by professionals in the field. The Writers' Project, later characterized by some as the federal government's attempt to "democratize American culture," was approved for federal monies in June, 1935. Baker chose his assistant, Alsberg, as director. As the Project continued into the late thirties, the director was powerless to stop increasing criticism by reactionary Congressmen who were intent on shutting down the enterprise. In October 1939, the Project's federal monies ceased, due to the Administration's need for a larger defense budget. After 1939, emasculated, the Project sputtered along on monies funded to the states, closing completely one year or so after America's entry into World War II.

Researchers should note that the American Memory collection presented here is a coherent portion of the Library's larger Federal Writers' series and the WPA collection. It includes the life histories and corollary documents assembled by the [Folklore Project](#) within the Federal Writers' effort.

## WPA Life Histories from New Mexico

218 titles

[List](#) All New Mexico Titles | [Search](#) All WPA Life Histories

These titles are mostly first-person accounts of life in New Mexico collected during the Great Depression. The WPA project categories include: EARLY SETTLEMENT, OLD TIMER STORIES, PIONEER STORIES and PIONEERS OF NEW MEXICO.

Subjects include: LOCAL HISTORY, including Civil War, Indian wars/campaigns, outlaws, land grants, architecture, roads, trails, wagon trains, prominent citizens, schools; IMMIGRATION/ETHNICITY, including Hispanic (Mexican) dress, outlook/attitudes, Indians (Comanche, Navajo, Apache) raids, trade, houses, customs, narratives, travel accounts and westward journeys; INDUSTRY/OCCUPATIONS, including ranchers, cowboys, prospector mining, buried-treasure lore, trade and merchants, teachers, soldiers; and RELIGION, including Catholicism, missions, relics.

Places mentioned include Lincoln Co., NM, Chaves Co., NM, Durango, CO, and Farmington, NM. Famous people mentioned include Kit Carson, Pat Garrett, the Kid, Geronimo and the writer Eugene Manlove Rhodes.

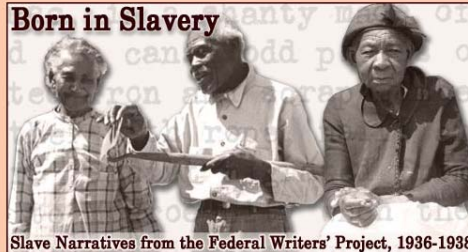
Interviews were conducted by project workers E. V. Batchler, Lorin W. Brown, James A. Burns, Marie Carter, Genevieve Chapin, Edith Crawford, W. M. E. Muriel Haskell, Carrie L. Hodges, Everet Houston, Joyce Hunter, Mildred Jordan, B. W. Kenney, Belle Kilgore, Bright Lynn, Lester Raines, George B. Redfield, A. Reuter, R. T. F. Simpson, Janet Smith, J. Vernon Smithson, Simeon Tajada, Frances E. Totty and Clay W. Vaden.

Select a different state from a [LIST](#) | [MAP](#)

[WPA Life Histories Home Page](#)

# WPA Slave Narratives from American Memory

The Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress and Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

Search by [Keywords](#) | Browse Narratives by [Narrator](#) | [Volume](#)  
Browse Photographs by [Subject](#) | Browse All by [State](#)

*Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938* contains more than 2,300 first-person accounts of slavery and 500 black-and-white photographs of former slaves. These narratives were collected in the 1930s as part of the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and assembled and microfilmed in 1941 as the seventeen-volume *Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from Interviews with Former Slaves*. This online collection is a joint presentation of the Manuscript and Prints and Photographs Divisions of the Library of Congress and includes more than 200 photographs from the Prints and Photographs Division that are now made available to the public for the first time. *Born in Slavery* was made possible by a major gift from the Citigroup Foundation.

The mission of the Library of Congress is to make its resources available and useful to Congress and the American people and to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations. The goal of the Library's National Digital Library Program is to offer broad public access to a wide range of historical and cultural documents as a contribution to education and lifelong learning.

[Slave Narratives:](#) [Voices and Faces from the Collection](#)

## Sarah Gudger, Age 121

I 'membahs de time when mah mammy wah alive, I wah a small chile, afoah dey tuck huh t' Rims Crick. All us chillens wah playin' in de ya'd one night. Jes' arunnin' an' aplayin' lak chillun will. All a sudden mammy cum to de do' all a sited. "Cum in heah dis minnit," she say. "Jes look up at what is ahappenin'," and bless yo' life, honey, da sta's wah fallin' jes' lak rain. \* Mammy wah tebble skeered, but we chillen wa'n't afeard, no, we wa'n't afeard. But mammy she say evah time a sta' fall, somebody gonna die. Look lak lotta folks gonna die f'om de looks ob dem sta's. Ebbathin' wah jes' as bright as day. Yo' cudda pick a pin up. Yo' know de sta's don' shine as bright as dey did back den. I wondah wy dey don'. Dey jes' don' shine as bright. Wa'n't long afoah dey took mah mammy away, and I wah lef' alone.

\*(One of the most spectacular meteoric showers on record, visible all over North America, occurred in 1833.)

Read [the rest of this narrative](#).



Sarah Gudger

NEXT: [Charley Williams, Age 94](#)

[Slave Narratives:](#) [Voices and Faces from the Collection](#)

Hear the story of Sarah Gudger told at our 11:00 storytelling session: Slaves, Sidekicks and Healers: Women's Stories Collected by the WPA

[+]  
FEEDBACK

420124

EX-SLAVE STORIES (Texas) Page One 263

TEMPLE CUMMINS was born at Brookland, Texas, sometime before the Civil War, but does not know her exact age. William Heyland owned Temple and her parents. She now lives alone in a small, weather-beaten shack in the South Quarters, a section of Jasper, Tex.

"They call me Temple Cummins and I was born at Brookland but I don't know jus' the 'xact date. My father's name was Jim Starkins and my mother's name was Charlotte Brooks and both of 'em come from Alabama. I had jus' one brudder, Bill, and four sisters named Margaret and Hannah and Mary and 'Liza. Life was good when I was with them and us play round. Miss Fannie Heyland, she Mis' Phil Scarborough now, she raise me, 'cause I was give to them when I was eight year old.

"I sleep' on a pallet on the floor. They give me a home-spun dress onct a year at Christmas time. When company come I had to run and slip on that dress. At other time I wore white chillens' cast-off clothes so wore they was ready to throw away. I had to pin them up with red horse thorns to hide my nakedness. My dress was usually split from hen to neck and I had to wear them till they was strings. Went barefoot summer and winter till the feets crack open.

"I never seed my grandparents 'cause my mother she sold 'em in Alabama when she's 17 and they bring her to Texas and treat her rough. At mealtine they hand me a piece of cornbread and tell me

-1-

Hear the story of Tempie Cummins at our 11:00 Storytelling: Slaves, Sidekicks and Healers: Women's Stories Collected by the WPA

# Placitas, New Mexico

From the Office of the New Mexico State Historian  
[http://newmexicohistory.org/placitas/placitas\\_project](http://newmexicohistory.org/placitas/placitas_project)

*Map Directory*

- Original Map
- Arroyos Map
- Places, Events & Stories
- WPA Stories

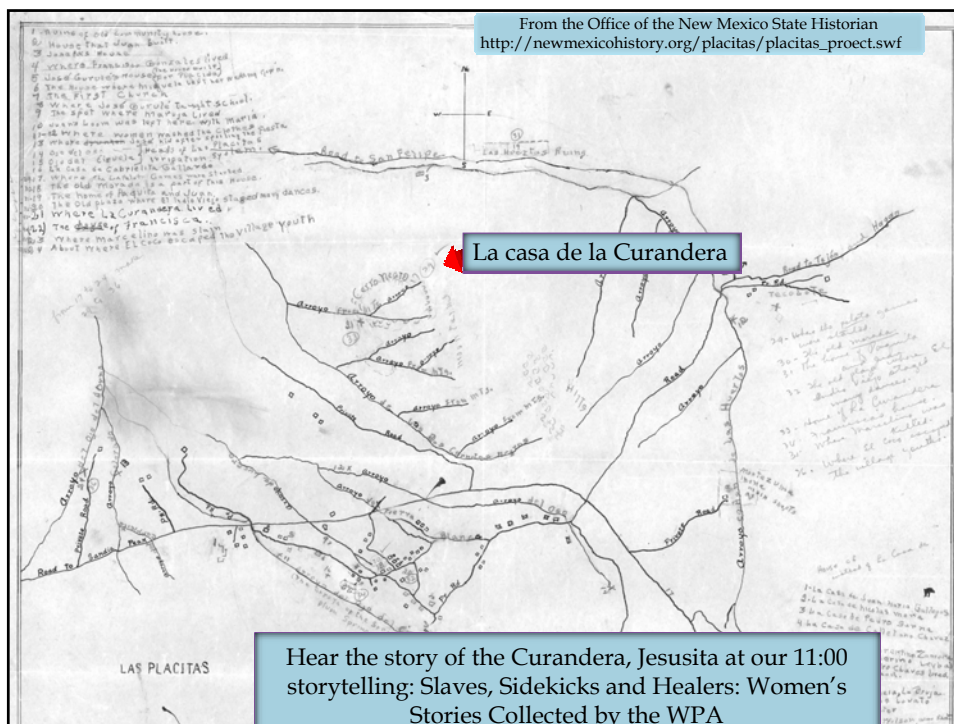
*Key*

- Use the ZOOM IN and OUT buttons to enlarge and reduce the maps.
- Use the hand to click & drag
- Use the magnifying glass to select the area you want to explore.

**Original Map**  
 The Placitas map designates places and events the stories told to Lou Sage Batchen by placitas residents for the WPA Writers Project. A date of the map, drawn by Batchen is known. The stories were collected between

*Office of the State Historian*

Web Info  
 Project Partners  
 NM State Historian



**THANK YOU!**

Dotty Ormes  
 Government Documents & Maps Librarian  
 New Mexico State University  
 Las Cruces, New Mexico  
 ormesd@lib.nmsu.edu