

HAROLD R. PHELPS
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10/3/90

Dear Ms. Conrad.

We certainly appreciate the time you spent with us getting information on Dr. Oschner. We did find the old dwelling which served as his hospital. It was kind of dark and rainy when I took a photo of it, but I am hoping the result is a good picture. Even though I was only nine when I was there it certainly looked familiar. I understand that the poor patients landed on the first floor. Well, that was where I was stretched out in bed for seven long weeks. I'm not complaining because I am very lucky to be here today and the Dr. played a major role in that.

Inclosed is a typescript of the interview I had with Mr. Martinez. I thought it would make it more meaningful with a description of myself and why the subject was important to me. He is certainly quite articulate for his age and seems to have a clear memory. I think a bit of salt should be taken with the story of A Dutton's embalming, but I think it a good story.

I noticed in reading some of the material that there seemed to be an interest in the Ku Klux Klan. My father's people migrated to Missouri before the Civil War and settled in what is referred to as "Little Dixie". As a result he was racist and anti-catholic. On the other hand Algernon Dutton who was prospecting in the Pagosa Springs area before the Civil War was a member of a Colorado Regiment of the Union Army and one of my mother's uncles helped found the Beecher Rifle and Bible Church at Waubaunsee, KA., and was part of the underground railroad helping slaves escape to Canada. As far as I am concerned I hope I have been able to thoroughly erase those particular attitudes of my father's from my own conscious and subconscious..

What does this have to do with the Ku Klux Klan in Southwest Colorado? While living in Ignacio my father was a member. We even used to have Klan picnics. I remember being told by my father that the letters K-I-G-Y painted on the glass transom of a grocery store in Bayfield meant "Klansman I Greet You". One night during an evening

service at the Methodist Church in Ignacio there was a slight disturbance at the front door and in marched six or eight hooded and robed figures who marched up to the pulpit and left a contribution. During the three years we lived there a cross was burned on a mesa overlooking the town. Of course Dad took the *Pillar of Fire* published in Denver. Years later I saw some of the Klan literature members received and was thoroughly shocked. Yes there was a Klan in Colorado. Funny thing there was only one family of blacks, well accepted, in Ignacio. So the objective must have been to keep the Mexicans and Catholics in line.

May the Center of Southwest Studies prosper.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Harold Pheasant". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.