

One Social History Of ASARCO

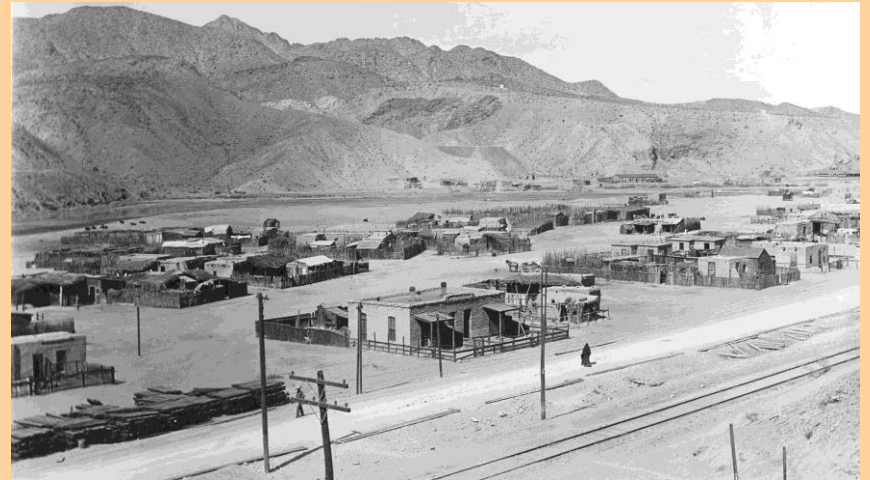
FIRST SMELTER IN TEXAS

THIS BUILDING WITH ITS TWO-FOOT THICK WALLS OF ADOBE WAS ERECTED IN 1887. THE FIRST STRUCTURE OF THE EL PASO SMELTER OF KANSAS CITY CONSOLIDATED SMELTING AND REFINING COMPANY. THE SMELTER WAS FOUNDED BY ROBERT SAFFORD TOWNE ON MARCH 22, 1887. ORIGINALLY A LEAD SMELTER, CHIEFLY FOR MEXICAN ORE, THE PLANT WAS TWO MILES FROM EARLY-DAY EL PASO. WHEN IT OPENED ON AUGUST 29, 1887, IT HAD 250 EMPLOYEES AND EQUIPMENT THAT INCLUDED A CHIMNEY, 100 FEET HIGH, MADE OF WOOD AND LINED WITH THIN SHEET IRON. ON APRIL 4, 1899, THE KANSAS CITY COMPANY WAS MERGED INTO THE AMERICAN SMELTING AND REFINING COMPANY, NOW KNOWN AS ASARCO Incorporated.

Smelter Town

Brought UP to the City

- Robert Stafford Towne began the smelter with 3,787\$ and change.
- 100 ft tall chimney and workforce of 250
- The town that grew up around the smelter become known as Smelter Town
- 1920 ASRACO was the largest mining operator in MEXICO



All My Dreams,

- 1951 ASARCO erects the 612 ft Smokestack to reduce sulfur dioxide concentrations in the ground
- 1967 828 ft tall smokestack to alleviate air pollution but still lead any city in Texas
- 1970 Asarco sued by El Paso for million violating the clean air act polluting 1,012 metric tons in the air
- Lead was discovered in the soil of Smelter Town, Asarco removed first 1.5 ft soil and replaced with fresh soil but contamination remained



Go Up In Smoke...

- Later company bought the whole land of Smelter Town and removed the residents
- Asarco spent 120 million in clean up and modernization and shut down zinc and lead operations only smelted copper
- By 1990 it employed over a 1000 people





SOCIAL JUSTICE

Was ASARCO's operation Equitable?

JOBS for Pollution

Long Term Pollution, depressed wages, cheap housing, immigration

Future Generations???