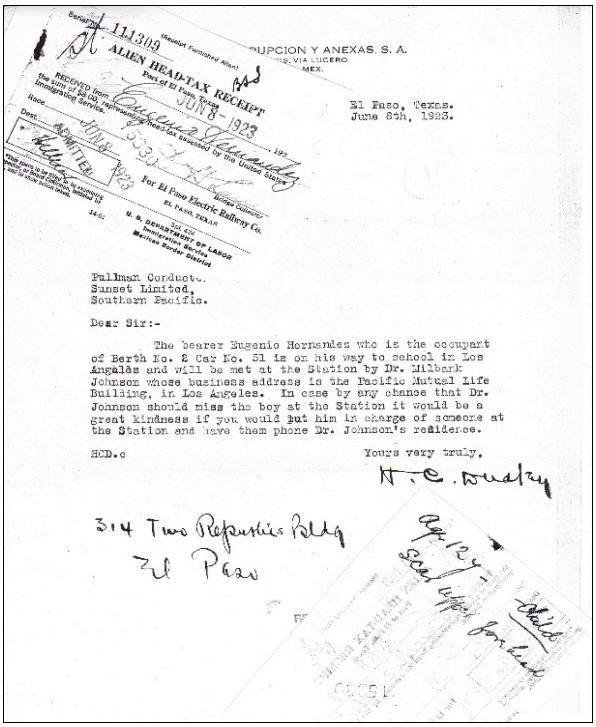
IN SEARCH OF THE OCCUPANT OF BERTH NO. 2, CAR NO. 51

Rosa Cesaretti



ALIEN HEAD-TAX RECEIPT
Port of El Paso, Texas
JUN 8 - 1923

UPCION Y ANEXAS, S. A.
VIA LUCERO
MEX.

El Paso, Texas.
June 8th, 1923.

Pullman Conductor,
Sunset Limited,
Southern Pacific.

Dear Sir:-

The bearer Eugenio Hernandez who is the occupant of Berth No. 2 Car No. 51 is on his way to school in Los Angeles and will be met at the Station by Dr. Milbank Johnson whose business address is the Pacific Mutual Life Building, in Los Angeles. In case by any chance that Dr. Johnson should miss the boy at the Station it would be a great kindness if you would put him in charge of someone at the Station and have them phone Dr. Johnson's residence.

HCD.c

Yours very truly,

H. C. Dudley

314 Two Republics Bldg
El Paso

Although there is a plethora of archival material left behind by the rich and famous people of Los Angeles in the 1920s, outside of government records, there is a dearth of archival evidence of the daily life of the man in the street. Universities, museums and libraries are typically depositories for the letters and diaries written by and about the privileged population of our society during the Roaring Twenties. Yet, the common people, living and working in the same city, left few traces of their lives. This is especially true of the Mexican immigrants who left little outside of birth and death records to detail their achievements. However, one young Mexican immigrant's daily activities were documented in a format most often discarded, and for over eighty years these documents were stored in an institution nestled in the hills of Los Angeles.

On Friday, June 8, 1923, a 12 year-old boy named Eugenio Hernandez bid his father goodbye at the El Paso junction of the Sunset Limited, and began a journey towards a new life in Los Angeles, funded by the millionaire "international mining figure," Harry Chittenden Dudley. [1] In his pocket Eugenio carried a letter signed by H. C. Dudley and addressed to the Pullman Conductor, informing him that the boy would be the "occupant of Berth No.2 Car No. 51… on his way to school in Los Angeles."[2] This letter served as a request that the conductor watch over Eugenio should no one meet him at his destination. Dudley's letter was carried from El Paso to Los Angeles and eventually made it to the offices of the Southwest Museum, where it remained hidden, a future clue in a mystery.

The story behind how these disparate individuals, Dudley and Hernandez, met might have remained forgotten. However, their relationship from 1923 until 1928 was documented through letters and receipts that surfaced from obscurity in the summer of 2006. Had the librarians of the Southwest Museum's Braun Research Library not decided to archive these scraps of history, Eugenio Hernandez's life might have remained anonymous like so many other immigrants crossing our southern border. Although Eugenio's connection to rich and famous

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[1] "H. C. Dudley, World Mining Man, Dies Here," Obituary, *The Duluth News Tribune*, June 20, 1968, http://nl.newsbank.com/nlsearch/we/Archives/?p_product=HADNT&p_theme=histpapter&p_nbid=&p_action=keyword&f_editSearch=yes&p_queryname=8 (accessed October 14, 2008).

[2] H. C. Dudley to Pullman conductor, June 8, 1923, "H. C. Dudley File," (1923-1927) [Including Eugenio Hernandez], Correspondence 1926-27, Braun Research Library, Los Angeles. This file includes most of the correspondence regarding the Eugenio Hernandez Trust Fund.

men saved him from silent obscurity, unearthing Eugenio's history required linking bits of information that alone signified little, but pieced together tell the story of how two men, H. C. Dudley and Herbert E. House, with the cooperation of the Southwest Museum, changed the life of a poor immigrant child. Moreover, the process by which Eugenio's story unfolded reveals the value of archiving private institutions' correspondence, government documents, and Internet data. Had any of the information gathered through these sources not been readily available, Eugenio's story may have remained buried with his death.

In the summer of 2006, as an intern at the Braun Research Library I was given the task of organizing three boxes of receipts dating from the 1920s. The Braun houses the collection of books, photographs, sound recordings, and ephemera that the Southwest Museum has collected since its inception in 1907, when Charles Lummis founded the museum as Los Angeles's first "free public museum of science, history, and art."[3] During the 1920s, as part of the Southwest Society, the museum was also instrumental in funding archaeological expeditions, with the mission to preserve the Native American imprint that was fast fading from the Southwestern landscape. The Director of the Braun Research Library, Kim Walters, suspected that within those boxes of receipts were bills attached to those expeditions. Furthermore, Ms. Walters surmised that since the receipts were eighty years old, they might themselves be of archival value.

Among the yellowed phone bills, brittle cancelled checks and assorted receipts were found handwritten and typed monthly expense lists, all from Herbert E. House. The expense lists covered personal items such as pants, ("light panama [and] khaki"), haircuts, drawing material, carfares, bicycle repairs, and room and board, all of which were for a person named "Eugenio Hernandez."[4] Most of the statements were signed by Herbert E. House; some were written on stationary for "The Hippityhops: the quick-action wheel toy-jumping dolls," others on plain stationary with Herbert E. House's address on California Street in Pasadena.[5] The dates on these lists extended from 1923 to 1928.

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[3] Charles Lummis, "About the Autry National Center of the American West: Founders," *Autry National Center of the American West*, http://www.autrynationalcenter.org/about.php#history (accessed August 1, 2006).

[4] Herbert E. House to Mrs. Cecile N. Winchester, Bursar, "H. C. Dudley."

[5] Herbert E. House to Dr. Comstock, August 23, 1923, "H, I, J," Southwest Museum Archives 1923, BRL.

The mystery intensified with the discovery of a "List of Obligations" dated "Aug. 6 '27." The penmanship was ornate, each word beginning and ending in swirls. The statement covered expenses such as: "To Mr. Wey Miller: $3... Horseback: 1.50... Country dances: .75... developing films: 1.50."[6] The letter closed with a request to the bearer of the note, " [to] be so kind as to send this by check as it will be enough to last me for the rest of the month." The note was signed, "Eugenio," was "Ok'd" by Herbert E. House, and the Southwest Museum had used check number 307 to cover the expenses. The question that emerged was, who was Eugenio Hernandez, and why was the Southwest Museum paying his bills?

The Braun Research Library depends on the assistance of volunteers for help in organizing the Southwest Museum's official and general correspondence. One entire row of shelves holds boxes arranged by date, containing files organized alphabetically. Some files include all the correspondence of a particular person, and some files contain all the correspondence from names beginning with a particular letter. Most of the correspondence involves prominent contributors to the museum, and information pertinent to the development of the museum. It is among these files that I came across
Eugenio Hernandez.

In 1923 H. C. Dudley was a mining engineer whose expeditions took him to Chihuahua, Mexico where he was part owner of the Ahumada Lead Mine. Born in 1878 in Guilford, Connecticut,[7] Dudley had married Marjorie Congdon of Duluth, Minnesota.[8] H. C. Dudley's own engineering endeavors, along with the money and prestige of the Congdon family, made him a very wealthy man. Upon Congdon's death, in 1916, his family inherited assets valued at $6,500,000.[9] According to the Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator from the United States Department of Labor's website, that amount is equivalent to $129,149,037 in the current economy.[10] The Duluth News Tribune

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[6] Eugenio Hernandez to Herbert E. House, August 6, 1927, "H. C. Dudley."
[7] Dudley Obituary.
[8] Patricia Maus, Curator Northeast Minnesota Historical Center, telephone interview by author, October 14, 2008.
[9] "Congdon Will Disposes of $6,500,000," *The Duluth News Tribune*, December 16 1916, page 1, http://nl.newsbank.com/nlsearch/we/Archives/?p_product=HADNT&p_theme=histpapter&p_nbid=&p_action=keyword&f_editSearch=yes&p_queryname=8 (accessed October 14, 2008).
[10] CPI Inflation Calculator, http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl (accessed November 20, 2008).

chronicled the comings and goings of Dudley and his wife, Marjorie Congdon Dudley, who was to become a renowned patron of the arts.[11] Their wedding announcement in 1917 included such details as their short courtship, (the wedding date was set for December 31 and announced on December 29), the recent death of Marjorie's father, and Dudley's imminent departure for the army.[12] The Dudley's decision was not unlike other newlyweds of the time who married quickly, uncertain whether the groom would be returning from the war in Europe.

That Mrs. Dudley traveled with Mr. Dudley during the time he met Eugenio is evident in Dudley's first letter to the Southwest Museum, dated June 9, 1923, in which he indicated that the enclosed check was from both him and his wife. He explained in his letter that the check was to "defray the expenses of Eugenio Hernandez," and he specified his agreement with Dr. Milbank Johnson of the Southwest Museum, to provide $150 per month for the care of Eugenio Hernandez.[13] He closed the letter with words revealing less concern with the money spent than with good wishes for the boy, "I hope that the next six months will show that the kindly interest that you have all taken in the boy is justified, and that some ear marks of genius may be discovered in him. If he has none, there will have been no harm done."[14] The letter was typed, but Dudley added in his own writing his home office address in Duluth, Minnesota.

H. C. Dudley began his mining career in Michigan soon after graduating from Harvard College in 1902.[15] Then, in 1919 he bought a mine in an area known as Los Lamentos, in Chihuahua, Mexico, with two other investors, Louis D. Ricketts and John C. Greenway. The original owners of the Ahumada lead company had succeeded in ridding the area from Pancho Villa's attacks by paying him a $20,000 ransom, but had failed to profit from the mine.[16] However, Dudley and his fellow

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[11] Maus interview.

[12] "Miss Congdon Chooses Date for Wedding," *The Duluth New Tribune*, December 29, 1917, Society 7.

[13] H. C. Dudley to Mrs. Cecil Winchester, the Bursar of the Southwest Museum, June 9, 1923, "H. C. Dudley File," Correspondence 1926-27, BRL.

[14] Ibid.

[15] H. C. Dudley Obituary, *The Duluth News Tribune*, June 20, 1968.

[16] Wendell E. Wilson, "Famous Mineral Localities: The Erupcion/Ahumada Mine: Los Lamentos District Chihuahua, Mexico." *Mineralogical Record*, November/December 2003, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3672/is_200311/ai_n9339631 (accessed October 14, 2008).

investors were experienced in the mining industry. Louis D. Ricketts was renowned for designing technological advances in copper mining.[17]

Dudley and Greenway met when they both were employed with the Oliver Mining Company of Northern Minnesota, which, like most mining companies around the world, was more concerned about the mine's profits than its employees. The mostly European miners' living conditions were meager and harsh. The miners lived in tarred paper shacks, endured health problems caused by outhouses "built directly on the ground without a proper receptacle for human waste."[18] Furthermore, the company deducted living expenses such as food, lodging and tools from their pay.

John C. Greenway's name crops up throughout history as an adventurer and exploiter. Greenway was a member of Roosevelt's fellow Rough Riders in the Battle of San Juan Hill, one of the bloodiest battles of the Spanish American War. [19] He was also among the Bisbee Leaders who were arrested during the Warren copper mine strike in 1917, accused of "depriv[ing] private citizens of their constitutional rights."[20] The fact that H. C. Dudley's business partner had such a checkered background, and that Dudley himself built his fortune from an enterprise that required the exploitation of other men, heightened the mystery of Eugene Hernandez and his connection to the Southwest Museum. Why was Harry Chittenden Dudley funding the board and education of a twelve year-old Mexican boy?

A second letter dated June 8, 1923 from H. C. Dudley was addressed to Doctor Milbank Johnson, of the Southwest Museum. This letter was in Eugenio's possession when he was to be met by Mr. Johnson.[21] It explains that Eugenio would arrive that Saturday evening in Los Angeles and that Dudley "had the proper papers made out before the Emigration Officers and [Eugenio's] father." The Alien Head-Tax receipt that is attached includes a hand-written description of Eugenio, "Age 12y child [underlined] scar upper forehead," matching Dudley's signature. [22] Dudley placed the responsibility of Eugenio's care on strangers, but must

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[17] Ibid.
[18] Neil Betten, "The Origins of Ethnic Radicalism in Northern Minnesota, 1900-1920," *International Migration Review,* vol.4:2 (Spring 1970), 54.
[19] Wilson.
[20] "Charge Kidnapping to Bisbee Leaders," *The New York Times*, July 10, 1919, Business & Finance, 18.
[21] H. C. Dudley to Doctor Milbank Johnson, June 8, 1923, "H. C. Dudley File," Correspondence 1926-27, BRL.
[22] Alien Head-Tax Receipt, June 6, 1923, Ibid.

have been aware of the enormity of this responsibility, crossing all of his "t"s and dotting all of his "i"s to ensure Eugenio's safe passage. The man who was to meet Eugenio in Los Angeles, Doctor Milbank Johnson, was the President of the Southwest Museum.

In January of 1923 the Southwest Museum had announced a record attendance of 78,000 for the previous year, showing a steady increase since Dr. Johnson arrived at the helm. Although the increase in the museum's attendance was attributed to "the improvements… made possible through the generosity of Dr. Norman Bridge," Dr. Milbank Johnson was in a good position to attract prominent personal contacts to the museum's membership roster.[23] Johnson's obituary described him as a professional committed to assisting young people towards the fulfillment of their endeavors, and involved in charitable organizations dedicated to education. He had also been the Director of the Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Company, Chairman of the Board of the California Taxpayers Association, and one of the founders of the Automobile Club of Southern California.[24] Although Dr. Johnson also showed a lapse in judgment when he extolled the virtue of Mussolini's "beneficent rule" in Italy in a 1924 lecture during a tour of Europe, his career was mostly marked by milestones of a life well lived, complemented with impressive titles from eminent institutions with influential close friends.[25]

The museum's success at this time was made possible through the efficacious personages attached to the museum's board such as Norman Bridges, giving good reason for Dr. Milbank Johnson to have cooperated with a man of Dudley's wealth and connections. However, no correspondence has been uncovered among the Southwest papers to explain why H. C. Dudley chose the Southwest Museum to intercede as bank and co-guardian for Eugenio Hernandez. Furthermore, there is nothing in any of the files at the Braun explaining who chose Herbert E. House, or why he was chosen to care for Eugenio Hernandez.[26]

There is little record of Herbert E. House's activities outside the Southwest Museum where he gave frequent lectures on China and

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[23] "Museum is Popular Place," *The Los Angeles Times,* January 21 1923, I16.

[24] "The Splendid Services of Dr. Milbank Johnson," *Los Angeles Times,* October 6, 1944, A4. Also "Obituary," *Star News,* October 3, 1944.

[25] "Italy Seen as Reborn Nation," *The Los Angeles Times*, July 8, 1924, A11.

[26] Although Herbert E. House was sometimes listed as "Reverend Herbert E. House" in the directories, he was not always addressed as "Reverend Herbert E. House" in the letters from the Southwest Museum. To simplify the matter the author will omit the title of "Reverend" in this paper.

Chinese artifacts. However, in the archives of the *Los Angeles Times* and the Library of Congress catalog include remnants of his literary side. In 1918, when he was a YMCA camp secretary he wrote a song called, "To France," in it the chorus calls, "To France… To Belgium and to Italy…to march, march on to victory."[27] He also published a book about a boy he once tutored, Yuan Yen Tai.[28] A search through Google for Herbert E. House produced a patent for an automatic alarm that House invented in 1917.[29] Although House served as unpaid curator to the Southwest Museum for a period, there is no record in the Southwest Museum files as to why his home was chosen for Eugenio Hernandez.

Nevertheless, according to the expense lists signed by the House and his wife, Myrtle House, between 1923 and 1928 they provided Eugenio with a wholesome and stimulating childhood. Their home stood a block from where the California Institute of Technology stands today, back when it was a residential neighborhood of new homes with remnants of the orange groves that once covered the area.[30] The first list is dated July 13, 1923 and details expenses incurred between the first days that Eugenio arrived on June 9 up till a month later, July 9. The Houses purchased twenty-two items of clothing, had Eugenio's hair cut, and mended his old shoes. They paid for carfares to and from the Southwest Museum, to the home of his art teacher, Jean Monheim, and to church services. They also paid for the services of a translator by the name of Salvador for Mr. Mannheim.

According to Dudley's first letter to the Southwest Museum, he had agreed to provide $150 per month for the support of Eugenio, and from this amount the Houses were paid $90 to cover room and board for the boy. They usually did not spend beyond the $150 allowed in the account, and they even managed to pay Eugenio a weekly allowance of fifty cents. The rest of his first summer living with the Houses, Eugenio was given books, art supplies, musical instruments such as castanets and a mouth organ. He was also taken to the circus and enjoyed swimming at the high school pool.[31]

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[27] Herbert E. House. 1918. "To France," *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1918, I14.
[28] Herbert Ellsworth House, *Yuan Yen Tai: The Worthy Son of a Famous Father* (New York: Foreign Missions Library, 1902).
[29] Herbert Ellsworth House, US Patent. 1242349, *Google Patent Search* (accessed November 29, 2008).
[30] William Deverell, "Their Niche in Pasadena's Living History," *Los Angeles Times,* April 12, 2007, F 1.
[31] All these receipts are found in the "H. C. Dudley File," BRL.

Eugenio's daily life at 923 E. California is revealed from these lists of expenses. Although his education was augmented with summer school he also enjoyed Boy Scout camp in Catalina. The summer of 1927 he spent at the "Jamacha Ranch near San Diego," an art camp run by Wilson Silsby.[32] Eugenio rode a bicycle, and he wore glasses, (often needing to have both repaired). That Eugenio was riding his bicycle during autumn evenings in 1924 can be deduced from the purchase of a bicycle lamp in the month of October. He attended school musicals and took fencing classes.

As he grew older, Eugenio's expenses included acne cream, mouthwash, and Glostora to keep his cowlicks under control. His leisure activities included frequenting movies, such as, *King of Kings*, and concerts at the Philharmonic. In August of 1928 Eugenio took a girlfriend to a Mexican Band Concert, which was novel enough for House to mention in his monthly expense account to the museum. However, the larger expenses were for art classes and art supplies such as drawing paper, molding tools, and the book, *Duval's Artistic Anatomy*.

The receipts for art classes reveal where and with whom Eugenio studied art. His first art teachers were Jean Manheim and Katherine Stetson Chamberlin. Jean Manheim, originally from Germany and trained in Paris, founded the Stickney Memorial Art School in Pasadena.[33] Katherine Stetson Chamberlin was the grandniece of Harriet Beecher Stow. She had trained as an artist in Italy and was married to another notable artist, Frank Tolles Chamberlin, who was famous for a mural that remains at the McKinley Junior High School in Pasadena. The House residence was walking distance from the Chamberlin's home, so Eugenio was able to walk to his art lessons with Mrs. Chamberlin. He was also given lessons at Mr. Chamberlin's studio, which has been deduced by the expense for carfare to Chamberlin's Los Angeles studio.

Eventually Eugenio enrolled at the California Art Institute, which was later changed to the Los Angeles Art Institute. Eugenio's artistic development was mentioned in the letters to and from Mr. Dudley, who wrote of his pleasure in Eugenio's progress. In one letter, he mentioned having received one of Eugenio's drawings and commented that it "was pretty good."[34] Dudley visited Eugenio and had the opportunity to

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[32] "Art Institute Will Open Ranch School," *Los Angeles Times*, May 2, 1927, A3. Also, in Statement from Los Angeles Art Institute, July 23, 1927, "H. C. Dudley File," BRL.

[33] "Founding Charter Members," *Pasadena Society of Artists,* http://pasadenasocietyofartists.org/m/ (accessed October 14, 2008).

[34] H. C. Dudley to J. A. Comstock, November 10, 1924, "H. C. Dudley File," BRL.

appraise Eugenio's progress for himself, which is supported from a letter dated November 20, 1923 in which he remarked that he "was struck with the progress the child has made in speaking English and also writing and reading."[35]

Most of the letters in the H. C. Dudley file contain positive mention of Eugenio's progress. However, in January of 1926, about the time that Eugenio might have been fourteen years old, the museum's Secretary-Treasurer, J. A. Comstock, wrote to House of complaints "that Eugenio's deportment in the Art School is not what it should be…he seems to have lost interest in his work, and is inclined to play."[36] In spite of this warning to Mr. House, five days later Mr. Comstock wrote Dudley requesting more money to be deposited in Eugenio's fund and included a glowing report on Eugenio's progress at the California Art Institute.[37] It may have been difficult to add a complaint about Eugenio in a letter that served as a request for more money, as well as a personal announcement of his own resignation from the museum.

The following month, the new museum Secretary-Treasurer, Charles L. Haskell, wrote House a stinging letter complaining about the increasing art supply expenses as well as reports on Eugenio's behavior in art class.[38] In this letter Haskell threatened to inform Dudley that his money was being wasted on a no-talent "lad," and admitted that it had been his own idea to remove Eugenio from private art lessons and have him placed in an art class setting with the intention of fostering in Eugenio the desire to achieve success. Interestingly, the expense lists further reveal that Mr. Haskell was the director of the art school that Eugenio was attending. Placing Eugenio in his own school may have had less to do with Haskell's concern for Eugenio's artistic progress than for his own school bank account.

Mr. Haskell seems to have followed through on his threat and wrote a letter to Dudley about Eugenio because a letter from Dudley, responding to John Comstock's letter about his resignation, mentions receiving a letter from "the California Art Institute regarding Eugenio." In this letter Dudley disregards Haskell's opinion of Eugenio not having any talent, impressing that,

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[35] H. C. Dudley to Mrs. Cecile Winchester, November 20, 1923, Box D, SWM Correspondence 1926-27, BRL .

[36] John A. Comstock to Herbert E. House, January 9, 1926, Box H, Southwest Museum Archives 1926, BRL.

[37] Ibid, John A. Comstock to H. C. Dudley, January 14, 1926.

[38] Ibid, Charles L. Haskell to Herbert E. House, February 11, 1926.

> No one, of course, can at all be sure of really what he will amount to; however, it does seem to me that his education will give him a chance in a year or two, anyway, to make something of his life, and it may be that the artistic instinct and ability is strong enough to really amount to something.[39]

Dudley was unwilling to consider the funds provided for the education of a young man as money misspent. This revealed an appreciation of the difference an education makes in a person's life beyond measuring the worth in financial profit, rather assessing the true value of knowledge garnered through formal education. In the five years that Eugenio lived at the home of Herbert House, Dudley spent close to, if not over, $7,500 on Eugenio, which would equal over $90,000 today.[40] Yet, as far as Dudley was concerned, any impact that they, Dudley, the Houses, and the Southwest Museum, were making on Eugenio's life was a sound investment.

Ultimately, Eugenio departed from House's home. In a letter to the Southwest Museum dated October 19, 1928, Mr. House informed them that Eugenio had moved out the previous month and was living with his parents while working "in the designing and art department of the Gladding-McBean Co, manufacturers of fine clay products."[41] Mr. House arranged to continue sending Eugenio an allowance of $14.50 to pay for his room and board at his mother's house, and had used some of Dudley's money on clothing for Eugenio. An earlier letter from Dudley to the Southwest Museum requested that the balance in the trust fund be given to House for any further expenses incurred for Eugenio and mentioned his decision that Eugenio "leave school and go to work."[42] Dudley closed with a thank you to the museum. That Mr. Dudley and Mr. House made arrangements to maintain contact is mentioned in letters between Mr. House and the museum in which House referred to seeing Dudley in the future and possibly taking him to visit the museum.[43] The story of Eugenio Hernandez ends with this last letter, and there is no

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[39] Ibid, H. C. Dudley to John Comstock, February 17, 1926.
[40] CPI Inflation Calculator, http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl (accessed August 1, 2006).
[41] Herbert E. House to Southwest Museum, October 19, 1928, "H. C. Dudley File," BRL.
[42] H. C. Dudley to Charles Amsden, October 15, 1928, "Dudley file, H. C. Eugenio L. Hernandez Fund," Southwest Museum Archives Correspondence File, General Office, 1928, Box A-M, BRL.
[43] Herbert E. House to Southwest Museum, November 3, 1928, and Mildred Poland to Herbert E. House, November 10, 1928, "H. C. Dudley File," BRL.

mention of Eugenio in letters from Mr. House to the Southwest museum from 1937 to 1940.

Liza Posas, the assistant reference librarian at the Braun Research Library, found an article with a quotation by a scenic artist named Eugenio Hernandez dated February 2001. In the article Hernandez discusses working during "Hollywood's Golden Age," the collaborative atmosphere in the art department, and his specialty, clouds.[44] However, it appeared uncertain as to whether this Eugenio Hernandez was the same Eugenio Hernandez who had been supported through the Southwest Museum more than seventy years earlier.

There are no photographs of Eugenio nor are there samples of his artwork in the files at the Braun, and according to the officials at the Pasadena School District, records of the student body are not kept that far in the past. Although a "Eugenio Hernandez" is listed in a 1928 Pasadena High School yearbook, there is no photograph of him.[45] At the same time, the Pasadena High yearbooks from the late 1920s include few Mexican faces among the photographs of any high school activities. There was only one non-white club, which was an all Black student organization. The Pasadena Directories from the years that Eugenio lived in Pasadena list the various churches of various denominations, using the terms "colored," or "Mexican," as added descriptions.[46] During the time that Eugenio Hernandez lived in Pasadena the city was segregated, and Eugenio, a Mexican, was living in an Anglo household in a white neighborhood, which must have had an impact on the young man.

A search in the Los Angeles Directories from the years 1928 to 1941 housed in the Law Library in Downtown Los Angeles lists a Eugenio L. Hernandez with "commercial artist," as his occupation.[47] On one of the expense lists in the Southwest Museum's archives, Eugenio had signed his name Eugenio L. Hernandez, making this the first possible clue that Eugenio Hernandez existed outside of the Southwest Museum's archives.[48] The same record lists Eugenio Hernandez living with a person

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[44] Ester Brody, "Faux Painting, Faux Effects: The Artist's Artist, Scenic Artists Create the Ultimate in Faux Images," *PaintPRO*, vol 3 no. 1, February 2001, http://www.paintpro.net/Articles/PP301/PP301-Faux_Images.cfm (accessed August 1, 2006).

[45] These yearbooks are kept in the Pasadena City College Library because Pasadena High School was connected to Pasadena City College in the 1920s.

[46] *Thurston's Pasadena California City Directory* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Directory Co, 1927).

[47] *Thurston's Los Angeles City Directory*, (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Directory Co, 1928 to 1941).

[48] Statement to L. A. Art Institute signed by Eugenio L. H., January 2, 1928, "H. C. Dudley

by the name of Irene Valdez, and the address matched one where a Martin Valdez lived who owned a liquor store. The possibility that Eugenio had married and lived with his in-laws added depth to the story behind the man that was beginning to emerge. While these bits of information, (the online interview, the directory listings, a name on a class roll), were adding up into a possible profile of a person by the name of Eugenio Hernandez, none of the evidence outside of the Braun's papers directly connected this Eugenio Hernandez to the boy who H. C. Dudley sponsored in the 1920s.

The Los Angeles Public Library maintains an Ancestry Library database. Entering Eugenio Hernandez's name and the year, 1923, I came across a Eugenio Hernandez who was born in Chihuahua, Mexico, and who had entered through El Paso, Texas. Upon clicking the prompt to view the scanned image of the original paperwork, the very same Alien Head-Tax Receipt that Eugenio had carried with him on his train ride to Los Angeles appeared, with Dudley's hand-written description on the back, "Age 12y child [underlined] scar upper forehead."[49] This Alien Head-Tax Receipt confirmed that this was the same Eugenio Hernandez who had lived in Pasadena with Herbert E. House, who was supported by H. C. Dudley, and who attended art classes for five years.

The Los Angeles Public Library also maintains a 1930 United States Federal Census database, where Eugenio L. Hernandez was listed as living at 712 New High Street in Downtown Los Angeles on April of 1930. Eugenio shared living quarters with his father, Bernabe Hernandez, his mother, Maria Lopez, and his four siblings, ages four to sixteen years. Eugenio's father was listed as being forty-five years of age and his occupation was recorded as laborer; Eugenio was nineteen years old at the time and his occupation was noted as, "painter."[50] The same address also listed two lodgers, which meant there might have been nine people living in the same residence. With this in mind, it appears that Eugenio left the home of Herbert House, and moved from a comfortable, financially secure, and stimulating household, into crowded and impoverished living conditions.

This new information further clarified what happened to Eugenio L. Hernandez from Chihuahua after he left the home of Mr. House, but

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File," BRL.

[49] Border Crossings: From Mexico to U. S., 1903-1957, *Ancestry Library edition*, http://search.ancestrylibrary.com (accessed November 15, 2008).

[50] 1930 United States Federal Census, April 15, 1930, Sheet No. 23A, *Ancestry Library edition*, http://search.ancestrylibrary.com (accessed November 15, 2008).

this still did not connect the person who worked as a scenic artist or the man who lived with Irene Valdez to the boy sponsored by H. C. Dudley. However, the number of siblings listed offered the possibility that a relative survived who might offer an answer to the question of what happened to Eugenio? Further research led to a daughter, Eugenia Hernandez, who still resides at Eugenio Hernandez's last known address. Ms. Hernandez provided the information that answered the questions as to how H. C. Dudley first met Eugenio and what happened to Eugenio when he left the home of Herbert House.

Eugenio's father, Bernabe Hernandez, had owned a store in Chihuahau, but the Mexican Revolution had forced him to close his business. Thereafter he moved his family to the mining town owned by H. C. Dudley to work the mines, while Eugenio, who had exhibited artistic talent early on, he apprenticed to a photographer. Eugenio had drawn an image of a lion he had seen in a moving company logo, which Bernabe proudly showed off to his fellow miners. Dudley saw this drawing and was surprised to hear that Eugenio had never received any formal training. Dudley offered to sponsor Eugenio, suggesting a military school in Mexico City that was known to offer art lessons. Eugenio voiced strong objections against being sent to a military school. Bernabe further discussed the matter with the other miners. They all agreed that Mexico City was very distant, so if Eugenio was going to be far from home, why not go to "Los Estados Unidos, a Los Angeles."[51]

Eugenio had been a skinny youth in Mexico, shy and timid, teased by his teacher with the nickname "squirrel" because of his high-pitched voice. He had also told his daughter about the poverty his family endured at the mine, and of the harsh discipline that he suffered from his father. Eugenio told his daughter about the train ride from El Paso to Los Angeles because he had been frightened, not knowing English, until a guardian angel of a gentleman came to his aid. He recalled a tall and elegant stranger, wearing a gray suit, who spoke Spanish and English, and who gave the Pullman an extra tip to ensure that Eugenio was well cared for.

Eugenio called Herbert House, "Father House," and he remembered his years in that household as happy years. House's home was chosen because the Southwest Museum wanted to place Eugenio in a "good Christian home."[52] Mrs. House was a caring foster mother and

[51] Eugenia Hernandez, telephone and personal interviews by author, November 23-30, 2008. Eugenia Hernandez said that the miners kept repeating, "Los Ustados Unidos."

[52] Hernandez interviews.

Father House was a patient guardian, teaching Eugenio how to speak and read English, as well as showing concern as to how others treated Eugenio. The House's had a son, Harvey, and Ms. Hernandez remembers her father telling her that Harvey was born in China during the time that House had worked as a missionary in China. Her father had fond memories of Harvey treating him like a younger brother. Usually there were students from China living with them as well, who lived in a separate part of the house that reminded her of monk's quarters.

However, there were problems for a Mexican living in a segregated community like Pasadena. Eugenio often recalled to his daughter one incident at the public swimming pool when he was almost turned away due to his Mexican features. His quick thinking friend "corrected" Eugenio and told the pool attendant that Eugenio was Spanish. This incident made such an impression on her father that he still recounted the story when he was an old man.

Eugenio's daughter said that her father blossomed under Father House's care, "started to come into his own," and developed into an outgoing, boisterous young man.[53] Ms. Hernandez believes that had he not left the mining town in Mexico, her father's artistic talents would not have developed, but would have withered and died. Furthermore, thanks to the healthy diet provided by Mrs. House, Eugenio grew to be over six feet tall, while his younger siblings all remained of shorter stature. As a young boy in Pasadena he taught himself to play the harmonica, won singing and dance contests, and rode his bicycle all over the city. He cared deeply for Father House and for his art teachers, maintaining contact with them far into adulthood. For five years Eugenio lived an idyllic life with a foster family who had seen enough of the world to appreciate the difference their involvement was making in Eugenio's life.

Bernabe Hernandez had followed his son to Los Angeles within months of Eugenio's arrival. Eventually he brought Eugenio's mother and younger siblings to Los Angeles in search for a better life. While Eugenio continued to live with Father House, he could not ignore the disparity of his family's life compared to his own. Eventually, Eugenio quit going to school, moved back with his family, and worked to help support his younger siblings. Not long after, Eugenio's father died of tuberculosis, leaving Eugenio's mother widowed with young children. Eugenio was forced to work several jobs to help his mother, as well as step in as disciplinarian to his younger siblings. By this time Eugenio

[53] Ibid.

held several jobs simultaneously: salesman, bathroom attendant, and master of ceremonies in a private club. While working as a master of ceremonies, he met his future wife, Irene Valdez. Also an artist, together they began their own fashion drawing business. However, eventually, yearning for larger canvases, Eugenio found a way to enter the Scenic Artist's Union. His artistic talent contributed to the sky in the crucifixion scene in the 1965 movie *The Greatest Story Ever Told*.

Eugenia Hernandez voiced her appreciation at being given a glimpse of her father as a young man that the expense lists housed at the Braun Library has offered her. She now knows when he learned how to play the harmonica that he still played when she was growing up. I read to Eugenia Hernandez the first letter Dudley wrote to the Southwest Museum in which he voiced the hope that "ear marks of genius" might develop in Eugenio from their involvement with him. When I came to the part in which Dudley added that if none was found, "there will have been no harm done," she responded with sentiments that would have eased any concerns Dudley, the staff at the Southwest Museum, or House might have harbored as to what Eugenio would amount to. "I think perhaps if we could speak to him now," Ms. Hernandez said, "he would tell us that he had an extraordinary life."[54]

The questions as to why Dudley decided to sponsor Eugenio, and why he chose the Southwest Museum as the middleman may never be fully answered. Fortunately, the Southwest Museum's staff of that time kept all their correspondence, and the current librarians at the Braun Research Library recognize the significance of maintaining the archives of the museum's layered history. Unfortunately, the city planners of the Los Angeles area have not been as diligent about preserving the architectural history of our city as the Braun has been in preserving the social history of Los Angeles. Herbert House's home on 923 East California Street has been replaced by a dreary parking lot for a Berlitz language school; the house on 223 South Catalina Avenue where Eugenio took art lessons from Katharine Stetson Chamberlin has been replaced with an apartment building; there is a Burger King on the corner of Alvarado and Ocean View where the Los Angeles Art Institute used to be located.

The letters and receipts archived at the Braun Research Library reveal that during a time in the history of Los Angeles when Mexicans were segregated from the Anglo population, a wealthy and privileged

[54] Ibid.

man took the time at some point on the day of his seventh wedding anniversary to send a "check for Six Hundred Dollars, on account of expenses of Eugenio Hernandez."[55] In the midst of conducting the business of a flourishing institution in an expanding metropolis, such as Los Angeles was in the 1920s, the personnel of the Southwest Museum marked the progress of an individual Mexican child. And an Anglo family living in segregated Pasadena nurtured a Mexican boy into manhood. The letters left behind describe the involvement of these three entities in Eugenio Hernandez's development, evidence of smaller parts of the larger puzzle of one man's life.

This episode that is chronicled in the Southwest Museum's archives specifically reveals the complicated nature of people engaged with one another on deeper levels than what society expected in 1923. This deeper level is evident in the man who built a fortune through the exploitation of nature and other men, yet who made the effort to improve a young boy's lot in life, and through those efforts was partly responsible for unshackling the artistic nature of Eugenio Hernandez. Like the imprint of prehistoric life fossilized in our deserts, these archives chronicle the individual experience of one immigrant who was given the opportunity to change his life through the generosity of strangers. Eventually Eugenio could not allow himself the luxury of furthering his education while his own family struggled, yet, because of the influence of H. C. Dudley and Herbert E. House, Eugenio Hernandez's life nevertheless was "extraordinary."

[55] H. C. Dudley to John Comstock, December 31, 1924, Correspondence File, 1924, Southwest Museum
Archives, BRL.