Jan 1977 Austin Am. Statesman

'Terlingua': Mercury

With reference to the Dec. 26 article on Dr. Kenneth B. Ragsdale's "Quicksilver: Terlingua and the Chisos Mining Company," an excellent addition to the publications on the Big Bend area, I would like to point out that the author has unwittingly perpetuated a myth concerning the derivation of the name "Terlingua." He states that it is a corruption of two Spanish words, *tres lenguas,* meaning "three tongues" in Spanish.

On a visit to Terlingua several years ago I noticed the State Highway Department sign explaining that the name of the village derived from the fact that three languages were spoken among its inhabitants: The owner was American, the miners were Mexican, and the cook was Chinese.

Unsatisfied with this interpretation since in Spanish *tres lenguas* would be spelled *trilingue,* I checked sources at home. Neither Velazquez nor Cassell offered any satisfaction — there exists no adequate Spanish-English dictionary — but upon further sleuthing, my 10-volume UTEHA (Union Tipografica Editorial Hispano Americana) encyclopedia supplied the answer. Terlingua is derived from the Spanish word *terlinguaita*, meaning mercury or quicksilver. Could anything be more simple?

DOLORES L. LATORRE
3506 West Ave

from Maj. Gen
R.H. Lewis, Ret.

441 Sheraton Drive,
San Antonio, Texas
October 7th 1948.

Dear Ruth:

When we got back to the cabin and found the picture on the mantlepiece we were delighted. We both think it is fine and I am so glad to have that particular view hanging in my room at home as it is my favorite view from the cabin. You might say after all this palaver that I might have written to you before to thank you for doing it for me. I think so myself and my only excuse for such impoliteness is that Laura and her kids arrived for a visit shortly after we got home and we have both been busy running around after them.

I hope you liked the paint job we did on the furniture in the cabin. We both think that it brightens up the whole place and like it very much. The screens are the best improvement we have made in the place since it was built;although I am sorry that Stuart felt called upon to fork up for them. It is a great relief to be able to sit down to a meal in peace without having to fight flies and to be able to take a nap in the afternoon without being waked up by the crawling on ones face.

Have Stuart and Marlin any plans about going down there this fall during the deer season? Dick Negley and I are planning to go down the latter part of this month but will be long gone by the time the deer season opens. We may not get to go at all as he was taken down with the flu about a week ago and has been quite sick in bed. He may not want to take a trip after his bout with the flu.

Susan and I surely had a fine time at the cabin this summer. I killed the third rattlesnake I have ever seen at the Love ranch down in the draw right below the cabin on the morning of the day before we left. It was not very big but, curiously enough had thirteen rattles.