



Around Terlingua (Images of America)

Thomas C. Alex, Robert E. Wirt

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The origin of the name Terlingua is obscure and lost in time. For the past century and a half, the area covered by the name has expanded to include numerous concentrations of people engaged to varying degrees in ranching, farming, and mining, or the support thereof. Farmers and ranchers produced agricultural products, woodcutters supplied timbers for the mines or fuel for the furnaces, and storekeepers supplied the goods needed for sustenance of this diverse community that was spread over much of south Brewster County in West Texas. Hispanic people who began settling the region in the 18th century were the backbone of the mining industry. Many of the families here today are descendants of the mine workers and continue contributing to the community. This story tells of the establishment and abandonment of Terlingua following the rise and decline in demand for mercury and how the ghost town was resurrected in the 20th century.

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