

Oklahoma City
January 13, 1921

Dear Mr Liebold:

Enclosed are two wills and a statement of D. E. George. I had the three signatures photographed. They will be mailed to me. Through these I got a line on Geo. E. Smith of Iowa. Smith lived in El Reno two years 1901-1902, and was the owner of the Progeess Clothing Store. He was one of the charter members of the Elks in El Reno - Charter granted Jan 8, 1902. He was quite well known and answers the description Penniman and Bates gave except the mustache. Smith came to El Reno from Waterloo, Iowa, and went back there. He loaned George money - thus the will in favor of Anna K. Smith, Geo. Smith's wife. Smith was simply fooled by George. After George's death Smith returned to El Reno - as Bates says - to check up George's Estate. The evening he returned and before he learned there was no estate, he was spending money like a drunken sailor and telling the boys at the Elks that he had inherited a lot of money - "Set up the drinks all around a great many times." He soon learned there was no estate and after stopping back in Enid and learning that there was a coroner's bill for \$76.00 and Undertakers charges, he quietly slipped away.

I am just giving you the outline of the story. I have the facts to back them up.

Whoever started the expression "I wouldn't believe him on oath," must have known Bates. Refer to his book page 238 and 240. The people of Hennessey never heard of George D. Ryan, but knew D. E. George, the house painter quite well from 1895 or 1896 to about 1900 or 1901. He worked at the painting trade during all the time he was there and spent most the money he earned on booze. He never exhibited any special amount of money but quite often borrowed fifty cents. Was considered odd and a little off. I have a lot of additional information from the people of this town along the line of

the above.

Refer to Bates Page 230.

The following is copied from the deeds and mortgages on files at the Canadian County Court House El Reno:

John J. Davis to D. E. George

Lot 18 and 19 Block 92 - Cottage - February 25, 1902.

Consideration \$700.00 (Bates has it \$3500.00)

Mortgage D. E. George to John J. Davis .

February 28, 1902 for \$350.00.

Released May 10, 1902, by payment.

The above deed was handled by a real estate man by name of Van Ess, through whom George paid the \$350.00 cash at time he bought the place. Here is where the check we have for \$350.00 to Van Ess comes in. This \$350.00 was borrowed from ^NAustine partly and part from an old man El Reno called "Possum" who seemed to be friendly to George. George fixed and painted the cottage and then sold it for \$1000.00 to J. W. Simmons, July 3, 1902. In the meantime he borrowed \$500.00 May 7, 1902, from Leo Berry, Real Estate & Money to Loan, giving Berry a mortgage payable two years from date, Interest 10%. With this \$500.00 George paid the \$350.00 to Davis and paid ^NAustines. This is the highest finance I've been able to find so far.

He left El Reno owing Miller, Drugs and Paint, over \$40.00, which Miller isn't expecting from the Booth estate. Bates says he painted but one house in El Reno. He painted three cottages belonging to the ^NAustines and superintended painting the ^NAustine Hotel and a great number of El Reno places look as though he must have been the only painter ever there. Miller says he bought a lot of paint from him and that people from several smaller towns near had George paint their places.

I haven't been able to locate Mrs. Harper yet. Both Austines^N are dead. I got some information from Mrs. Austine^N. Have been trying all afternoon to locate C. M. Clark, who said "George was George."

Very truly yours

F. L. Black