

Ethel Edwards was born in Opelousas, La. in 1914. She moved to New Orleans about 1923 and for the rest of her life, by her own choice, claimed New Orleans as her place of birth. When Ethel finished high school our father insisted that she go to a business college in New Orleans to learn how to type and take short hand in preparation for secretarial career. When it became clear that a business career was out of the question our father helped her get a scholarship to Newcomb College. She enrolled with a clear determination to follow her interest in art. That interest had been fostered by our great-uncle, George Henry Clements. Henry Clements was an accomplished artist who had studied at the Union Art League in New York and later at two different Academies, Julien and Colarossi, in Paris.

Fortunately for Ethel, the Newcomb art department was particularly strong at that time. Several members of its faculty later achieved national and international reputations. The most dynamic and influential instructor on the faculty was the Spanish-born painter Xavier Gonzalez. (It was no surprise to us that some 50 years later Xavier was named the outstanding instructor by students at the Art Students League in New York). By her sophomore year Ethel decided she wanted to go to attend Xavier's summer art colony in Alpine, Texas. Alpine is one of the gateways to the Big Bend area, an area filled with dramatic scenery. By the end of the summer they were married in the small West Texas town of Alpine. Mr. Gonzalez continued with his summer art colony until World War 11 when it was discontinued.

The Gonzalez's lived in Washington for a few years then moved to New York City. For the remainder of their careers which extended into the 90's they worked both in New York and Wellfleet, Cape Cod, Mass. They both taught at the Art Students League and a summer school in Wellfleet. Ethel outlived Xavier by six or seven years. The ashes of both were scattered in Central Park in New York City a few blocks from their last place of residence overlooking the Park. Ethel died in 1999.