

# *Chronicles of the Trail*

*Quarterly Journal of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association*

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*Vol. 9, No. 2*

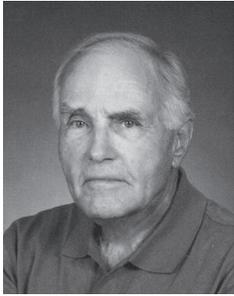
*Summer 2013*

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Ysleta del Sur Mission Church, El Paso, Texas, c. 1907

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings,

Your CARTA board has been busy the past couple of months. We've finally gotten into high gear preparing for the Symposium in El Paso this September. I hope you've had a chance to check out the announcement which you either have or will soon receive. I think it will be one of the most interesting presentations concerning Los Caminos Reales in the Americas so far.

El Paso is a city of many facets and if you don't live there, it's worth your while to spend a little time checking it out. It's a far cry from the old frontier town some still see it as and the fall is the best time to visit. So give some thought to turning the CARTA Symposium into a long weekend's adventure.

At our last board meeting in Albuquerque we were introduced to Peggy Hardman, a high school teacher and active historian from Socorro. She has accepted the challenge of becoming our new interim treasurer. We bid her an enthusiastic welcome. At the same time, we offer our sincere gratitude to our departing treasurer, Rob Spence, for his many efforts and contributions over the past year.

While I'm passing out thanks, I'd like to include a hearty dose for the board members who are putting in all the extra time and effort toward the success of the Symposium. It's going to be special and they are the reason. Additional thanks to our federal partners whose support has been unwavering in spite of the difficulties they face this year with budget adjustments. Finally, thanks to all of you who have renewed your memberships and to our new members—welcome aboard. We promise to try to make it worth your while.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sim Middleton', written in a cursive style.

Sim Middleton

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CARTA Presents:  
**“Los Caminos Reales de América”**  
**An International Symposium**  
**El Paso, Texas**

Thursday, September 26–Sunday, September 29

To register, please see [www.caminorealcarta.org](http://www.caminorealcarta.org)  
or contact Troy Ainsworth  
(505) 528-8267; [executivedirectorcarta@gmail.com](mailto:executivedirectorcarta@gmail.com)

*Membership in CARTA is open to all. Please see the membership form on our website: [www.caminorealcarta.org](http://www.caminorealcarta.org)*

*CARTA's mission is to facilitate goodwill, cooperation, and understanding among communities, and to promote the education, conservation, and protection of the multicultural and multiethnic history and traditions associated with the living trail, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro.*

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New Mexico Heritage Preservation Award Winner

# Chronicles of the Trail

Summer 2013

Vol. 9, No. 2

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## CARTA

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FRONT COVER: *Ysleta del Sur Mission, El Paso, TX, c. 1907. The c. 1851 church was partially destroyed by fire in 1907. Photographer unknown. Courtesy Diocese of El Paso.*

BACK COVER: *El Paso del Rio del Norte historic trail marker near Sunland Park, Doña Ana County, NM, commemorating the spot where El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro crosses the Rio Grande, Photograph by Bill Kirchner, 2010.*

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**EXECUTIVE EDITOR:** Catherine López Kurland

Save the Date  
**CARTA ANNUAL MEETING**  
**Saturday, October 26**  
 El Camino Real Historic Trail Site  
 (formerly El Camino Real International Heritage Center)

EL CAMINO REAL DE TIERRA ADENTRO TRAIL ASSOCIATION

CARTA, PO Box 1434, Los Lunas, NM 87031-1434

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[www.caminorealcarta.org](http://www.caminorealcarta.org)

## EDITOR'S LETTER



Dear Reader,

This fall you can harvest the fruits of decades of research by scholars and trail enthusiasts at CARTA's international symposium, "Los Caminos Reales de América," taking place on the campus of the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). On Thursday evening, September 26, the American and Mexican consul generals will be ready to cut the ribbon for the opening of the three-day bilingual event, followed by historian John L. Kessell's keynote address, "Miera y Pacheco: A Renaissance Spaniard in New Mexico." The following evening, Chief Supervisory Anthropologist of Tribal Relations and American Cultures program at the National Park Service, Joe E. Watkins, will give a second keynote address, "Intercultural Conflicts and the Camino Real: Borderland Politics and Political Borders." Daylight hours on Friday and Saturday will be packed with groundbreaking presentations on Spain's royal roads. The presentations will conclude on Saturday evening with Dianne Layden's talk, "Juan de Oñate: Commemoration and Controversy" at the banquet dinner.

In view of our upcoming symposium in El Paso, Janine Young previews the nine-mile-long El Paso Mission Trail, a highlight of the optional bus tour on Sunday, September 29, and Leslie Bergloff, site manager of the Magoffin Home, unravels the 19<sup>th</sup>-century origins of this fascinating house museum.

Two autumn specials for CARTA members are hikes on the Camino, the first in September along La Bajada led by National Park cultural resource specialist Michael Romero Taylor, and a second one in mid-November to a rock-strewn petroglyph site on Tonuco Mountain with rock-art authority Margaret Berrier.

We are honored to feature New Mexico State Historian Robert J. Tórréz's "A Harsh Introduction to American Jurisprudence," a fresh perspective and detailed account of the turbulent and arguably unjust transition from Mexican to American governance.

Your *Chronicles'* editor had the pleasure of interviewing Nicolasa Chávez, curator of *New World Cuisine: Chocolate, Mate y Más* at Santa Fe's Museum of International Folk Art, on food, wine, herbs and other culinary delights from the Old and New Worlds that found their way to New Mexico on El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro.

Sadly, we recently learned of the passing of longtime CARTA member Larry Castillo-Wilson. This issue is going to press in time to include a short tribute.

Two books that we are confident our readers will want to know about are John Kessell's biography of Miera y Pacheco, described by Julianne Burton-Carvajal, and George Torok's long-awaited study of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, reviewed here by Joseph Sánchez.

CARTA and *Chronicles* wish to express their appreciation to all of the contributors for sharing their scholarship and writing, and to Julie Newcomb and Kristen Reynolds for their invaluable copyediting.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine".

Catherine López Kurland

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*Chronicles of the Trail* is a publication of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association (CARTA).

Past issues of *Chronicles* are posted to our website one year after publication.

*The purpose of this journal is to stimulate interest in El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and encourage readers to join in the adventure of memorializing and exploring one of the great historic trails of North America. We look forward to receiving manuscripts and photographs for Chronicles of the Trail. We prefer material in digital format, and photographs at 300 dpi. Please send your submissions to ckurl@mac.com.*



*Ysleta del Sur Mission Church, El Paso, Texas. Courtesy Diocese of El Paso.*

## **LOS CAMINOS REALES DE AMÉRICA: International Symposium in El Paso, Texas September 26–29, 2013**

El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association (CARTA) will be hosting *Los Caminos Reales de América: An International Symposium* from September 26 to 29, 2013, in El Paso, Texas. The symposium will explore the history and significance of the routes established by the Spanish Royal Crown in its New World colonies from the capital of the Viceroyalty in Mexico City. These “royal roads” served as arteries for exploration, trade, and cultural exchange.

An impressive array of more than twenty distinguished scholars and specialists from the United States, Latin America, and Spain will present during sessions on Friday and Saturday, September 27 and 28. Instantaneous interpretation will be available from English to Spanish and from Spanish to English.

Events will commence on Thursday afternoon, September 26, with a special tour of the El Paso Museum of History, followed by an opening reception at the Hilton Garden Inn University Hotel. At the evening reception, eminent historian John L. Kessell will present a keynote address, “Miera y Pacheco: Dominguez and Escalante’s Unruly Cartographer.”

Speakers’ sessions will take place all day on Friday and Saturday, September 27 and 28, at the El Paso Natural Gas Conference Center at the University of Texas at El Paso. On Friday evening, Joe E. Watkins will present a second keynote address, “Intercultural Conflicts and the Camino Real: Borderland Politics and Political Borders.” There will be a banquet dinner on Saturday evening with a presentation by Dianne R. Layden, “Juan de Oñate: Commemoration and Controversy.” The symposium will conclude on Sunday, September 29, with a bus tour of historic sites in and around El Paso.

Who Should Attend: Academics, anthropologists, archaeologists, historians, social scientists, historic preservationists, genealogists, students, history buffs, and anyone interested in the Spanish colonial history of the Americas.

How to register:

You can register and learn more about the symposium on CARTA’s website: [www.caminorealcarta.org](http://www.caminorealcarta.org).

For further information, contact CARTA Executive Director Troy Ainsworth at (575) 528-8267 or [executivedirectorcarta@gmail.com](mailto:executivedirectorcarta@gmail.com).

# “Los Caminos Reales de América”

## PRESENTATIONS

### KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

**John L. Kessell**, “Miera y Pacheco: Dominguez and Escalante’s Unruly Cartographer”

John Kessell, Professor Emeritus at the University of New Mexico, has dedicated his academic career and numerous publications to the history of colonial Latin America and the American Southwest. His presentation and just-published biography, *Miera y Pacheco: A Renaissance Spaniard in Eighteenth-Century New Mexico* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2013) bring to light the fascinating life of this polymath who achieved fame not only as a mapmaker, but also as a sculptor and trusted advisor on military, civil, and Indian affairs to Juan Bautista de Anza. Miera y Pacheco was stationed at the presidio in Paso del Norte for twelve years before moving to Santa Fe.

**Joe E. Watkins**, “Intercultural Conflicts and the Camino Real: Borderland Politics and Political Borders”

Earlier this year Joe Watkins joined the National Park Service as Chief Supervisory Anthropologist of the Tribal Relations and American Cultures program, which oversees the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) program, the Park Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (Park NAGPRA) program, and the Park Ethnography program. This appointment follows Watkins’s service as Director of the Native American Studies Program at the University of Oklahoma, and as Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico from 2003 to 2007. Author of *Indigenous Archaeology: American Indian Values and Scientific Practice* (AltaMira Press, 2001) and *Reclaiming Physical Heritage: Repatriation and Sacred Sites* (Chelsea House Publishers, 2005), his current study interests include the ethical practice of anthropology and the study of anthropology’s relationships with descendant communities and aboriginal populations.

### SPEAKERS SESSIONS

*Speakers Sessions will be held at El Paso Natural Gas Conference Center at the University of Texas at El Paso.*

#### Friday, September 27

**Sherill L. Spaar**, Chama, New Mexico, “The Bumpy Ride from Antiquity to the 16th Century Conquest: An Overview of Premodern Roads, Frontiers and Trade in Iberia”

Sherill Spaar, full Professor Emerita at East Central University, Ada, Oklahoma, has published extensively on ancient world maritime archaeology and history, including the southwest coast of Iberia.

**Julianne Burton-Carvajal**, Monterey, California, “Past, Present, and Future of the Camino Real de Alta California”

Julianne Burton-Carvajal retired in 2010, following more than four decades at University of California, Santa Cruz, as professor of literature, film, Latin American Studies and California Studies. Since retiring from teaching, she has served as Coordinator of Research, El Camino Real de California Initiative, Curator of Exhibitions at the Museum of Monterey, and Editor, *Boletín: Journal of the California Mission Studies Association*. She has a BA in Spanish from Denison University, and an MA and PhD in Romance Languages and Literature from Yale University.

**Luis Arnal**, Mexico City, Mexico, “Caminos, Rutas, Líneas y Poblados en el Septentrión”

Luis Arnal Simón obtuvo la Licenciatura en Arquitectura, la Maestría en Restauración de Sitios y Monumentos, y el Doctorado en Arquitectura. En el norte de México confluyeron y se interconectaron varios tipos de caminos, unos de tipo utilitario, otros de orden militar y otros de comunicaciones entre pueblos, haciendas y reales; pero en todos los casos, su objetivo fue acercar a las personas y bienes para protegerse, comerciar e intercambiar productos. Se analizará la relación entre los varios tipos de caminos.

**Juan Antonio Siller Camacho**, Mexico City, Mexico, “La presencia indígena tlaxcalteca en el Camino Real de Tierra Adentro”

Juan Antonio Siller Camacho es Dr. en Arquitectura y Arqueología, Catedrático de la División de Estudios de posgrado de la Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad Nacional de Antropología e Historia, miembro del ICOMOS México, Morelos, y Consejo Internacional de Monumentos y Sitios de la UNESCO.

**Mark Santiago**, Las Cruces, New Mexico, “Apache Colleras along los Caminos Reales, 1770–1810”

Mark Santiago is Director of the New Mexico Farm & Ranch Museum in Las Cruces, after six years as Director of the New Mexico Museum of Space History in Alamogordo. He is the author of the award-winning *Massacre at the Yuma Crossing: Spanish Relations with the Quechans, 1779–1782* (University of Arizona Press, 1998).

**Elizabeth Oster**, Santa Fe, New Mexico, and **David H. Reynolds**, Albuquerque, New Mexico, “On the Trail in the Jornada del Muerto: Searching for the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro”

Elizabeth Oster has worked for more than twenty-five years in archaeology, historic preservation, and cultural resources management, conducting archaeological fieldwork in New Mexico, Arizona, Louisiana, and Mexico. She holds MA and PhD degrees in Anthropology from Tulane University. David Reynolds is experienced in the historic and prehistoric archaeology of the Southwest, including survey, excavation, and cultural materials analysis. He holds a BA in Anthropology from the University of Denver. Currently, Oster and Reynolds’s work in the Jornada del Muerto combines an array of remote sensing technologies with standard archaeological field methods, permitting a fuller characterization of the cultural landscape than has previously been possible.

**Alejandro González Milea**, Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, “Colonias Militares y caminos: Emilio Langberg en el siglo XIX”

Alejandro González es Arquitecto por la UAM Xochimilco, Maestro y Doctor en Arquitectura por la UNAM. Trabajó en varias oficinas del INAH, y trabajó como Profesor Investigador en el Instituto Politécnico Nacional, fue Investigador Visitante del Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales de la UNAM, y desde 2010, es Docente Investigador de la Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez. Publicó, en 2010, un libro, *La Nueva ciudad del norte mexicano*.

**William Henry Mee, Jr.**, Santa Fe, New Mexico, “Traditional Life in Agua Fria: One Point along the Camino Real”

William Mee grew up in Agua Fria Village in the 1960s, one stop south of Santa Fe on El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. He reveals new discoveries about the history and prehistory of Agua Fria, the subject of decades of his research and writing. The story of this village is one of sustainability, resilience, respect, and tradition. Mee’s presentation is based on his Final Report to the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area, “Agriculture in Agua Fria Village: How a Community Was and Can Be Self-Sufficient.”

**Clara Payán de Sandoval**, Albuquerque, New Mexico, “Estrechando Nuestras Manos, Enlazando Nuestras Fronteras”

Clara Payán de Sandoval is a bilingual drama teacher in Albuquerque, whose students learn to write, produce and perform original bilingual plays. As founder of a 5<sup>th</sup>-grade two-way exchange with students in Chihuahua, Mexico, she has developed a binational, multidisciplinary curriculum based on the segment of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro between Albuquerque and Chihuahua. She earned an MA in Spanish Language and Literature from the University of New Mexico.

**Saturday, September 28**

**Christopher Talbot**, Nocogdoches, Texas, "The Camino Real in Rural Honduras: Visual Exploration and a Need for Preservation"

Photographer Christopher Talbot, Director of the School of Art at Stephen F. Austin State University, will compare photographs of the endangered Camino Real in Honduras with images of trail remnants of the Camino Real de los Tejas.

**Edgardo Venturini**, Córdoba, Argentina, "El Camino Real en Córdoba, Argentina: Itinerario Cultural-Turístico"

Arquitecto, Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo y Magister en Gestión Ambiental del Desarrollo (M.Sc.GADU) Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina. Director del Instituto del Ambiente Humano, Facultad de Arquitectura, Urbanismo, y Diseño y Director de la Carrera de postgrado Especialización en Gestión del Turismo Sostenible Centro de Estudios Avanzados, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina. Evaluador consultor de ICOMOS.

**Leticia Raffaele and Diana Rolandi**, Buenos Aires, Argentina, "El Qhapaq Ñan/ El Sistema Vial Andino en el Noroeste Argentino: Problemáticas en tomo a su gestión y conservación"

Diana Rolandi es Dirigente del Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Pensamiento Latinoamericano, de la Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación. Es coordinadora técnica del Programa Qhapaq Ñan/Sistema Vial Andino a nivel nacional y, a su vez, ejerce como Secretaría Técnica en el plano regional y para UNESCO. Leticia Raffaele es miembro del equipo técnico del Programa Qhapaq Ñan/Sistema Vial Andino Argentina e investigadora del Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Pensamiento Latinoamericano. Licenciada en Antropología (con especialización arqueológica) de la Universidad de Buenos Aires.

**Jésus F. de la Teja**, San Marcos, Texas, "Exploring Nature along the Caminos Reales in Texas"

Jésus de la Teja is Professor of Southwestern Studies and Regent's Professor of History and serves as Director of the Center for the Study of the Southwest at Texas State University, San Marcos. He holds a PhD in Latin American History from the University of Texas at Austin.

**Juliana Dávila Gamboa**, Bogotá, Colombia, "Las Rutas y los productos de intercambio en la Cuenca Baja del Río Chicamocha y su area de influencia. Análisis de su evolución histórica para la valoración de su patrimonio cultural"

Juliana Dávila Gamboa es arquitecta de la Universidad Santo Tomás de Bucaramanga, y Magistra en Patrimonio Cultural y Territorio de la Universidad Javeriana de Bogotá.

**Adrián Hernández Santisteban**, Mexico City, Mexico, "Landscape Archaeology: The Camino Real from Veracruz to Mexico City"

Adrián Hernández Santisteban tiene su maestría en Estudios Arqueológicos en la Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia y es licenciado en Geografía por la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. One major interdisciplinary approach that can be used to study roads is landscape archaeology. A road goes through a process of consolidation once it receives influence from places beyond its local area and when it is able to create and transform landscapes. The two main variants of the Camino Real México-Veracruz are being considered.

**Marta Martín-Galbaldon**, Mexico City, Mexico, "El Camino Real de Chiapas: Su paso por la Mixteca oaxaqueña"

Marta Martín-Galbaldón is currently working on her PhD in Anthropology, in the field of ethnohistory. El objetivo principal de esta ponencia es mostrar el trazado del Camino Real a su paso por la Mixteca oaxaqueña y su relación con el panorama de las congregaciones civiles que se pretendían efectuar a finales del siglo XVI.

**Alberto Ramírez Ramírez**, Durango, Mexico, "Conservación de los Sitios Patrimonio Cultural de la Humanidad: Itinerario Cultural Camino Real de Tierra Adentro en Durango"

Nació en la ciudad de Durango, cursó sus estudios profesionales de arquitectura en la Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León. Obtuvo los grados de Maestro y Doctor con Mención Honorífica, con el Proyecto: Patrimonio Edificado de Tierra del Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, en la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. La presente está basada en la restauración, conservación y la regeneración de imagen urbana del Camino Real de Tierra Adentro a través del Estado, como a los asentamientos humanos que fueron estableciéndose a lo largo de la ruta.

**Rocío Marcela Acosta Chávez and Enrique García Blanco**, San Luis Potosí, Mexico, “El Patrimonio Gastronómico del Camino Real de Tierra Adentro: Mestizaje de culturas y sabores”

Rocío Marcela Acosta Chávez es miembro del Consejo Directivo del ICOMOS Mexicano y miembro del Comité Científico Internacional de Itinerarios Culturales del ICOMOS y del Subcomité de Ciudades Históricas Iberoamericanas del ICOMOS Internacional. Enrique García Blanco es investigador de la Dirección de Patrimonio Cultural de la Secretaría de Cultura de San Luis Potosí. Cursó sus estudios de licenciatura en Economía y de Especialidad en Historia del Arte Mexicano en la UASLP.

**Ariadna Deni Hernández Osorio**, Madrid, Spain, “Camino Real de Tierra Adentro: El carácter especial de un itinerario cultural”

Ariadna Deni Hernández Osorio nació en la Ciudad de México. Es Licenciada en Planeación Territorial y Maestra en Ciencias y Artes para el Diseño por la Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Unidad Xochimilco. Actualmente es doctoranda en Geografía Humana del Programa de posgrado “Geografía y Desarrollo: Territorio, Sociedad y Turismo” por la Universidad de Madrid, con la tesis doctoral “Bases Ambientales para la comprensión de la dimensión espacial y temporal como proceso histórico del Camino Real de Tierra Adentro.”

**Michael Romero Taylor**, Santa Fe, New Mexico, “International Perspectives on Cultural Routes in Context with El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro”

Michael Romero Taylor is a Cultural Resource Specialist, National Trails-Intermountain Region, National Park Service.

**7:00–9:00 PM Banquet Dinner**  
**Hilton Garden Inn University Hotel**

**Dianne R. Layden**, Albuquerque, New Mexico, “Juan de Oñate: Commemoration and Controversy,”

Since the late 1960s, Layden has taught at University of Guam, University of New Mexico, University of Houston at Clear Lake, University of Redlands, Santa Fe Community College, and Central New Mexico Community College. She was conferred a PhD in American Studies in 1983 from the University of New Mexico.

**PRE-SYMPOSIUM TALKS AT EL PASO  
MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY**

**Saturday, September 7**

**Vernon Geronimo Lujan**, Española, New Mexico, “Camino Real de Tierra Adentro: Six Centuries of Trade on a Route in Use from the 15th to the 21st Centuries”

Vernon Lujan is an active participant and community member of the Pueblo of Taos, and speaks Tiwa fluently. His ancestry also includes the Pueblo of Tesuque. He received his Bachelor of University Studies in Southwest Studies and a Master of Public Administration from the University of New Mexico. Lujan is a contributing author and editor for the Taos County Historical Society, the “Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Annual Visitor’s Guide,” *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, and the New Mexico Office of Archaeological Studies and Historical Research Associates. He is a member of CARTA’s Board of Directors.

**Saturday, September 21**

**Mary Louise Johnson Thompson Ridinger**, Antigua, Guatemala, “Cocoa and Sacbés: Royal Roads Across the Maya Heartland”

Mary Ridinger is an archaeologist, jade miner, researcher, lecturer, and business administrator who has resided in Antigua, Guatemala, since 1974. She holds a BA in Latin American Studies from the University of Colorado, and an MA in Anthropology from the Universidad de las Américas, Cholula, Pueblo, México. Ms. Ridinger has devoted her entire professional career to the study of Mesoamerican archaeology and the cultural significance of jade; she has published many articles on the significance of jade in Central American cultures, and has presented numerous lectures on Mayan lifeways, astronomy, and art.

# HIKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HISTORY THIS FALL: LA BAJADA AND TONUCO MOUNTAIN

By Troy Ainsworth

CARTA members are invited to explore New Mexico history on El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. CARTA is sponsoring two hikes this fall, one in the north—La Bajada on Saturday, September 14—and one in the south—Tonuco Mountain on Saturday, November 16.

century wagon roads traversed during the Mexican and early Territorial eras, and early twentieth-century automobile highways, including Route 66. The hike is moderately strenuous: the footing on the old dirt road is not difficult, but there is a substantial elevation gain from 5,500 to 6,100 feet. (Flatlanders: beware of the altitude adjustment!)



*La Bajada Hill, 2008. © Martin Stupich and HABS/HAER.*

## La Bajada

The September 14 hike will encompass the infamous La Bajada, approximately fourteen miles south of Santa Fe. Michael Romero Taylor, a cultural resource specialist with the National Trails Intermountain Region, National Park Service, will lead a full-day walking tour of this significant route in New Mexico history. The volcanic escarpment delineated the administrative and cultural boundary between the Rio Abajo and Rio Arriba regions of the Spanish Colonial era. Along this steep slope are alignments from El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro used during the Spanish Colonial period for more than two hundred years, nineteenth-

## Tonuco Mountain

On November 16, there will be a CARTA hike to Tonuco Mountain, between Hatch and Radium Springs in southern Doña Ana County. Margaret Berrier, a recognized authority on rock art, will speak about the nuances and forms of the more than 250 petroglyphs from AD 1200–1300 that are found on this site at the mouth of the Jornada del Muerto. On the faces of many large boulders in a rock-strewn draw are etched stone surfaces, visible evidence of earlier people who carved their worldview pictographically. Although the focus of this hike is the rock art, the opportunity to ascend to the summit

of Tonuco will be available for those who wish to view the spectacular expanse of New Mexico's pristine landscape from atop the mountain. For about two hundred yards, the way gradually rises over igneous rock, making for a moderate hike until the difficult final quarter-mile. Ben Brown and Troy Ainsworth will be your trail guides on the Tonuco hike.

Both hikes will either traverse the route of El Camino Real or be within the historic route's viewshed. With regard to La Bajada, the connection to the former Royal Road will be immediate and apparent, and Mike Taylor will provide plenty of information about the route being walked, its historical and cultural significance, and its place within the story of New Mexico. Through her

discussions of ancient petroglyphs, Margaret Berrier will elaborate upon a period of human history predating the entrada of Don Juan de Oñate at the end of the sixteenth century.

**It is imperative that participants on both hikes bring plenty of water, snacks, a wide-brim hat, and good walking or hiking shoes.**

To sign up or for further information, please contact Troy Ainsworth, CARTA Executive Director, by mail at CARTA, P.O. Box 1434, Los Lunas, New Mexico 87031-1434; email at [executivedirectorcarta@gmail.com](mailto:executivedirectorcarta@gmail.com); or telephone (575) 528-8267.



*Petroglyphs on Tonuco Mountain, New Mexico. Courtesy of the author.*

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*View from Tonuco Mountain, New Mexico. Courtesy of the author.*

# A HARSH INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN JURISPRUDENCE: THE NEW MEXICAN “REVOLT” AND “TREASON TRIALS” OF 1847

By Robert J. Tórrrez

There are a great number of events that impacted the history of what is often referred to as the Spanish Borderlands. Few, however, have had the impact, or been more controversial, than the Mexican-American War of 1846–1848. In a period of less than two years, this conflict between neighbors redrew the entire map of North America and changed the destinies of all who lived in this vast region that today constitutes the American Southwest. This essay will provide a brief review of the events that led to this war between the United States and Mexico and the subsequent military occupation of New

Mexico in 1846. However, our principal emphasis will be the little-known but critical events that followed that occupation, which our history books call the “Revolt of 1847” and the subsequent “Treason Trials.”

The occupation of New Mexico by U.S. Troops in 1846, the colonization by Juan de Oñate in 1598, and the re-conquest of New Mexico by Diego de Vargas in 1692 have one particular element in common—all three events are often characterized as peaceful and bloodless because each was accomplished without firing a shot. However, just as the revolt at Acoma in 1599 followed the peaceful colonization and the Pueblo uprising followed Vargas’s return to New Mexico in 1692, the permanent occupation of New Mexico by American troops in 1846 turned out to be anything but “bloodless” or “peaceful.” Within six months of that day in August 1846 when General Stephen Watts Kearny and his troops marched into Santa Fe, as many as three hundred New Mexicans died in battles against the U.S. Army, and at least two dozen others were hanged for actions they took in defense of their country.

*. . . the permanent occupation of New Mexico by American troops in 1846 turned out to be anything but ‘bloodless’ or ‘peaceful.’*

## Background of the Mexican-American War

The declaration of war between the United States and Mexico was issued on 13 May 1846. However, the seeds of this conflict had been sown a decade earlier, when Texas declared its independence from Mexico in 1836. At the time, the borders of the United States of America were creeping westward; it was a country intent on achieving its destiny—its manifest destiny, some said—to encompass the continent from “sea to shining sea.” It seemed only a matter of time before the nascent Republic of Texas would itself become part of an expanding United States.

The election of James K. Polk as President of the United States in 1844 sparked a series of events that finally led to war. Polk had been elected on an expansionist platform that supported Texas annexation and sought to extend the boundaries of the United States to the Pacific coast by obtaining New Mexico (keeping in mind that New Mexico boundaries included what is today Arizona)

and California. In July 1845 the United States Congress began this process when it voted to annex the Republic of Texas. In an attempt to avert war with Mexico, Polk dispatched John Slidell to offer the Mexican government as much as \$35,000,000 in exchange for recognition of Texas independence and for Mexican territory extending from New Mexico to Upper California. Mexico’s refusal to sell its territory enabled the American government to assert they had tried their best to acquire the territory by peaceful means.

The Mexican rebuff prompted President Polk in early 1846 to order the American Army under Zachary Taylor to march to Texas and “defend the Rio Grande.” The Americans built a fort north

of the Rio Grande crossing at Matamoros, a site which most sources agree was not within the historic boundaries of Texas, and waited for the Mexicans to respond. They did not wait long. In late April 1846, elements of the American and Mexican armies engaged in skirmishes in which a number of American troops were killed. When news of the clashes reached Washington nearly three weeks later, President Polk had accomplished what he apparently had hoped for all along—the ability to claim that American blood had been spilled on American soil by a foreign aggressor. Polk immediately went before Congress and asked, not for an outright declaration of war, but for an acknowledgement that a state of war existed with Mexico. Congress complied on 13 May 1846.

### **The War Comes to New Mexico**

For New Mexico, the first few weeks of the war were uneventful. But that began to change in June, when the American Army of the West, commanded by Colonel (soon to be General) Stephen Watts Kearny, began its march along the Santa Fe Trail towards the undefended northern Mexican frontier. By late July, Kearny and his troops had reached the northern border of Mexican territory at the Napeste (Arkansas) River, and on 31 July 1846, while encamped near Bent's Fort, Kearny issued the first of his proclamations regarding the occupation of New Mexico:

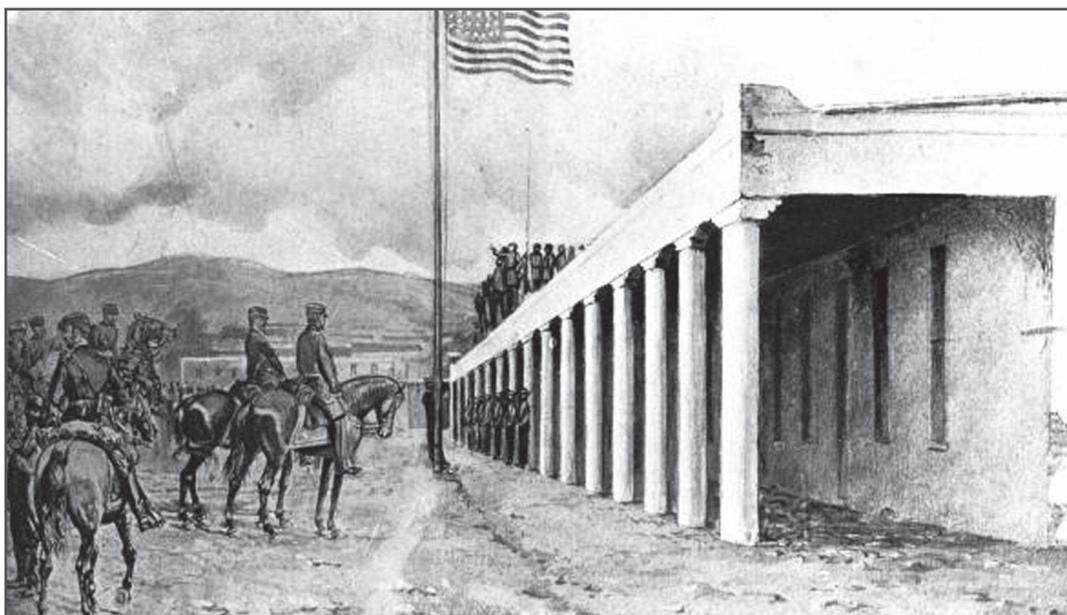
The undersigned enters New Mexico with a large military force, for the purpose of

seeking union with and ameliorating the condition of its inhabitants. This he does under instructions from his government, and with the assurance that he will be amply sustained in the accomplishment of this object. It is enjoined on the citizens of New Mexico to remain quietly at their homes, and to pursue their peaceful avocations. So long as they continue such pursuits, they will not be interfered with by the American army, but will be respected and protected in their rights, both civil and religious.

All who take up arms or encourage resistance against the government of the United States will be regarded as enemies, and will be treated accordingly.<sup>1</sup>

Kearny and his forces then marched unopposed into New Mexico. On 15 August 1846, the American army reached Las Vegas, the northernmost Mexican settlement along the Santa Fe Trail. At Las Vegas, Kearny climbed on the roof of one of the buildings that surrounded the plaza, absolved all those present from allegiance to the Mexican government, and proclaimed himself governor. After persuading reluctant local officials to take an oath of allegiance to the new government, Kearny and his troops proceeded west towards the New Mexican capital in Santa Fe.

Three days later, the American army entered Santa Fe without opposition. Governor Manuel Armijo had decided not to oppose Kearny and



*Raising the American flag over the Old Palace, Santa Fe. Ralph Emerson Twitchell, 1909. Courtesy of the author.*



Colonel Sterling Price. Courtesy of the author.

ordered the *presidio* troops and militia to abandon the defensive fortifications they had prepared at Apache Canyon, twenty miles east of Santa Fe. By the time Kearny's forces reached the canyon, Armijo and the Mexican national troops stationed in Santa Fe were on their way

south to Chihuahua. On August 22, Kearny issued a formal proclamation that reiterated his possession of New Mexico and his intention to hold this northernmost outpost of the Republic of Mexico. He assured the residents assembled in the historic plaza that their right to property and freedom of worship would be protected and that they would soon be provided the right to a "free government . . . similar to those in the United States." Then he concluded:

The United States hereby absolves all persons residing within the boundaries of New Mexico from any further allegiance to the republic of Mexico and hereby claims them as citizens of the United States. Those who remain quiet and peaceable will be considered good citizens and receive protection—those who are found in arms, or instigating others against the United States, will be considered traitors, and treated accordingly.<sup>2</sup>

Although it was later determined that Kearny exceeded his authority in doing so, that day he presumed to confer United States citizenship on the people of New Mexico and absolved them of any loyalties to the Mexican Republic. These were actions reserved to Congress, but at the time his error would weigh heavily on the lives of those who later chose to resist the American occupation, by allowing them to be considered traitors against the United States.

The reasons why the Americans were able to take New Mexico without firing a shot are varied, complex, and beyond the scope of this discussion. Juan Bautista Vigil y Alarid, the Secretary of Government (a position similar to the contemporary Secretary of State) under the departed Governor Manuel Armijo, was apparently the ranking government official remaining in Santa Fe after Armijo fled the country. Vigil y Alarid's formal response to Kearny's proclamation noted a reluctant

acceptance of this *fait accompli*. "The sincere, honorable, and hardworking inhabitants of this Department offer their deference to the Government of North America. No one in this world has successfully resisted the power of the stronger." Then he continued, in what had to have been a most somber occasion:

Your Excellency, do not think it strange that we have not manifested joy and enthusiasm in seeing our city occupied by your military forces. To us the political entity of the Mexican Republic has died. She, regardless of her circumstances, was our Mother. What son does not shed copious tears at the tomb of his parents?<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps anticipating that the lack of military opposition did not mean this new government was entirely welcome, General Kearny's August 22 proclamation contained a stern warning to the citizens of New Mexico. He pointed out that his forces were equal to the task of suppressing any opposition, and made it clear it would be "foolish, ignorant and downright insanity for any discontented person to even think of resisting. . . ."<sup>4</sup> During that first week of September 1846, Kearny also disarmed the Mexican *presidio* companies at Santa Fe, Taos, and San Miguel del Vado, by ordering them to turn in their weapons and ammunition.<sup>5</sup>



Governor Charles Bent. Courtesy of the author.

Kearny also took initial steps to establish a civil government under the new American regime. On 22 September 1846, he issued the following "NOTICE":<sup>6</sup>

Being duly authorized by the President of the United States of America, I hereby make the following appointments for the Government of New Mexico, a Territory of the United States.

The officers thus appointed will be obeyed and respected accordingly.

Charles Bent, to be Governor.

Donaciano Vigil, to be Secretary of the Territory.

Richard Dallam, to be Marshall.

Francis P. Blair, to be United States district attorney.

Charles Blummer, to be treasurer.

Eugene Leitensdorfer to be auditor of public Accounts.

Joab Houghton, Antonio José Otero, Charles Beaubien to be judges of the Superior Court.

Two weeks later, on 7 October 1846, Kearny also issued the "Laws of the Territory of New Mexico," the legal code that became the basis of civil and criminal law in New Mexico. This codification of American law has become more commonly known as the "Kearny Code."

### A Deceptive Silence

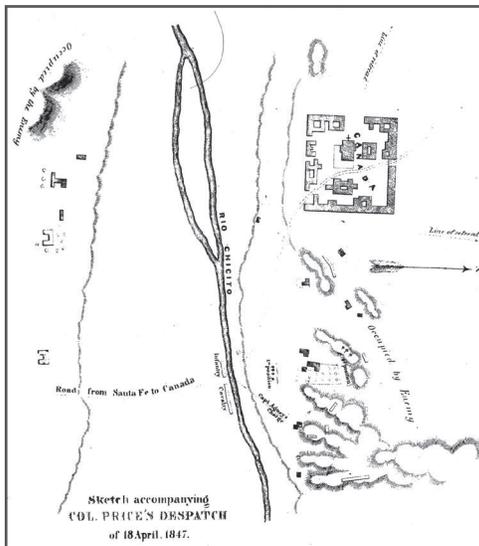
With the new civil government in place all seemed quiet in New Mexico, and for the remainder

Events heated up in December. After General Kearny departed New Mexico for California, military command was assumed by Colonel Sterling Price. Governor Bent informed Price that a group of men headed by Diego Archuleta and Tomás Ortiz were trying to "excite" the citizens of New Mexico against the American government. Later that month, Bent ordered the arrest of seven men described as "secondary conspirators" in a plot to overthrow the new government. Two unnamed "leaders and prime movers," possibly Tomás Ortiz and Diego Archuleta, were still being sought.<sup>8</sup> These arrests apparently stymied an uprising originally planned for the night of 19 December 1846. However, planning for a general uprising against the *Americanos* continued.

### The Insurrection Begins

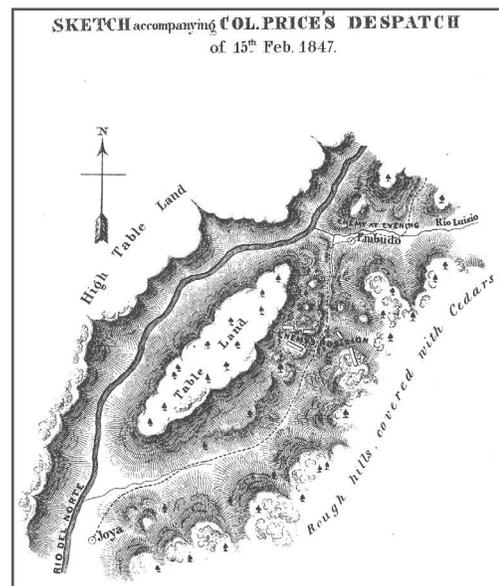
On 19 January 1847 a large group of armed men attacked the home of Governor Bent at Don Fernando de Taos, seventy miles north of Santa Fe. By the end of the day, Governor Bent and six officials of the recently organized civil government lay dead. Within two days, the uprising had spread through much of northern New Mexico, and several Americans and Mexicans supportive of the new government were killed.<sup>9</sup>

At Santa Fe, Colonel Price learned of Governor Bent's death on January 20, when he received word that a large force of "rebels" was advancing towards the capital. Price, four hundred troops, and several pieces of artillery that would prove instrumental in the battles that ensued,



*The Battle of Embudo. U.S. Congress, "Insurrection," 1848.*

of 1846 there is little indication of overt opposition to the new government; while war raged in Mexico, the former Mexican territory of New Mexico appeared to be under peaceful occupation. But the silence was deceptive. That fall, reports bandied about names of individuals who were speaking out against the occupation and encouraging resistance, if not revolt. On 21 October 1846, these rumblings of a growing opposition concerned Governor Bent enough to prompt him to impose a strict 10 p.m. curfew in Santa Fe.<sup>7</sup>



*The Battle of Cañada. U.S. Congress, "Insurrection," 1848.*

marched north from Santa Fe on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Price's force was accompanied by a company of volunteers under Ceran St. Vrain recruited from among the American merchants, Santa Fe Trail freighters, and others who were at the capital when Price received news of the insurrection. St. Vrain's company, incidentally, included seven men with Spanish surnames.<sup>10</sup>

The following day, January 24, Colonel Price's forces engaged and dispersed a force of approximately 1,500 New Mexicans at Santa Cruz de La Cañada, about twenty-five miles north of Santa Fe. The official report of the encounter tells us the

American troops suffered two men killed and six wounded, while thirty-six "rebels" were killed. In the meantime, the insurgent forces retreated and reorganized at the strategic gorge of the Rio Grande northeast of Santa Cruz near Embudo, along the principal route to Taos. On the 27<sup>th</sup>, Price advanced to Los Luceros and, two days later, engaged the New Mexican forces between La Joya (today's Velarde) and Embudo. When the smoke cleared, the American forces controlled the pass, and the New Mexicans retreated to Taos, where they regrouped and fortified themselves at the

pueblo of San Geronimo de Taos. Casualty reports for the battle at Embudo show the New Mexicans suffered approximately twenty men killed and sixty wounded, while the American troops had one man killed and one severely wounded.

While Colonel Price and his troops were engaging the New Mexican forces at Santa Cruz and Embudo, a number of American traders had been killed on the east side of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in the vicinity of Lo de Mora (today known simply as Mora). A company of American troops from Las Vegas responded to the attacks by assaulting the settlement of Mora on January 24. Their initial assault was repulsed by the New Mexicans, but a week later the United States forces returned to Mora, and on February 1 mounted a

devastating artillery barrage that forced the New Mexicans to abandon their positions in the town. The American troops then entered Mora and proceeded to level the community to the ground. At least twenty-five New Mexicans were reported killed in these actions. The fate of several prisoners taken at Mora by the Americans is unknown.

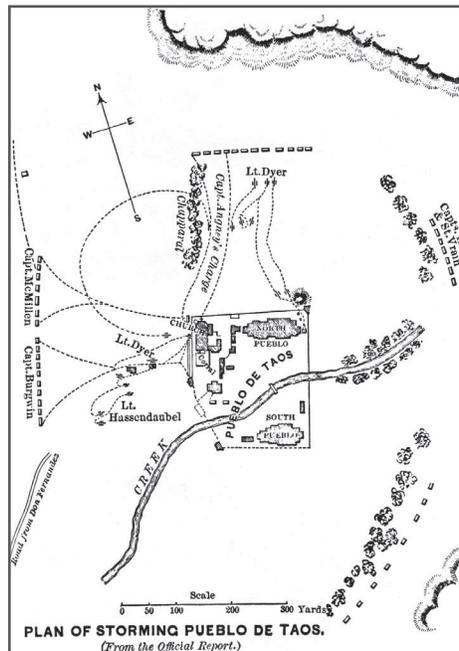
Back on the west side of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Colonel Price continued his advance on Taos. On February 3 they marched through the settlement of Don Fernando (today's town of Taos) and commenced an artillery barrage on the

Pueblo of Taos, where the New Mexicans and their Indian allies had fortified themselves. Late the following morning, Price's troops began their assault on the pueblo along two fronts. The Americans managed to fight their way past the outer defenses, but were unable to dislodge the New Mexicans from the church of San Geronimo, whose massive adobe walls provided a large measure of protection from the artillery.

Finally, at three o'clock that afternoon of February 4, the Americans wheeled the largest gun they had—a six pounder—to within sixty yards of the church, and

began to batter the wall at a spot where an earlier attempt to chop through with axes had been beaten back. When the wall was breached, the cannon was brought up to point-blank range, and several rounds of grapeshot were poured into the hole.

The onslaught was too much for the valiant but apparently outgunned defenders to resist, and a general retreat ensued as the Americans stormed through the breach. At this point several hundred Mexicans and Pueblo allies abandoned the pueblo and attempted to escape. According to several sources, Ceran St. Vrain's company was ordered to pursue those that fled, and according to all reports they did so with apparent enthusiasm as his men killed more than fifty before they reached the safety of the nearby hills.



From *Massacres of the Mountain*, by J. P. Dunn, Jr. New York, 1886.

Various sources estimate between 150 and 200 defenders died at the pueblo. The 17 July 1847 issue of the *St. Louis (Mo.) Daily Republican* carried a story of the battle at Taos that suggests casualties among the women who carried water to the defenders and cared for the wounded. One "old squaw" was seen to fall from the ramparts after she was shot while pointing a gun at the attacking American troops. Phillip St. George Cooke, a participant in the battle, writes in *The Conquest of New Mexico and California*, "In the heat of the assault, a dragoon was in the act of killing a woman, unrecognized by dress, similar to the man's, and both sexes wearing the hair long; in this extremity she saved her life by an act of the most conclusive personal exposure!" (Phillip St. George Cooke, *The Conquest of New Mexico and California, An Historical and Personal Narrative*, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1878, p. 121.)

We can estimate that at least 300 New Mexicans died on the battlefields of northern New Mexico in January and February, although the actual number will likely never be known. Several dozen survivors were captured, including Pablo Montoya and Tomás Romero, who were identified as principal leaders in the insurrection. Romero was killed the following day, shot by a nervous guard while allegedly trying to escape.

### **The "Treason Trials" Begin**

On February 6 Colonel Price convened a military court to try Pablo Montoya and several unnamed individuals for their part in the revolt. Three separate charges were lodged against Montoya. The first was that on 19 January 1847, the day Governor Bent was killed, Montoya "did . . . excite the Indians and Mexicans to rebellious conduct." Second, that on 25 January 1847, he had issued a proclamation "exciting the people to rebellion," and finally, that he had conspired to "rob United States wagons loaded with public funds."<sup>11</sup>

Justice was meted out quickly to Pablo Montoya. He was indicted, tried, convicted, and sentenced to hang, all in that first day of court. According to the death warrant issued by Colonel Price, Montoya was hanged on 7 February 1847 sometime between eleven in the morning and two o'clock that afternoon, "in the centre of the plaza" of Don Fernando.<sup>12</sup> The scant documentation does not explain what happened to the unnamed individuals who were captured with Romero and Montoya, but they likely were held pending the trials that

resumed in April.

Following Montoya's execution at Taos, the scene shifted to Santa Fe, where a grand jury was convened on March 8. This jury returned indictments for "High Treason" against four men believed to be the principal leaders and organizers of what has come to be known as the "Revolt of 1847."<sup>13</sup>

The first indictment in these "Treason Trials" was against Antonio María Trujillo of Los Luceros, a community located north of present-day Ohkay Owinge (San Juan Pueblo). The long and elegantly handwritten indictment charges that Trujillo, "withdrawing the allegiance, fidelity & obedience which every true and faithful citizen of the United States should & of right ought to bear towards the [government of the United States] . . . most wickedly & traitorously did levy and make war against the said government. . . ."

Trujillo was tried and convicted of the charges on March 12, and sentenced to hang on Friday, the 16th of April. One can imagine the hush that descended over the crowded courtroom as Judge Joab Houghton addressed the condemned prisoner that stood before him:

Your age and grey hairs have excited the sympathy of both the Court and the jury. . . . Yet have you been found guilty of the crime alleged to your charge. It would appear that old age has not brought you wisdom nor purity or honesty of heart. . . . You have nourished bitterness and hatred [sic] in your soul. You have been found seconding the acts of a band of the most traitorous murderers that ever blackened with the recital of their deeds the annals of history. . . .

For such foul crimes, an enlightened and liberal jury have been compelled from the evidence . . . and by a sense of their stern but unmistakable duty, to find you guilty of treason against the government *under which you are a citizen* [emphasis added]. And there only remains to the court the painful duty of passing upon you the sentence of the law, which is, that you be taken hence to prison, there to remain until Friday the 16th of April next and that at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of that day you be taken thence to the place of execution and there be hanged by the neck till you are dead! dead! dead! And may the

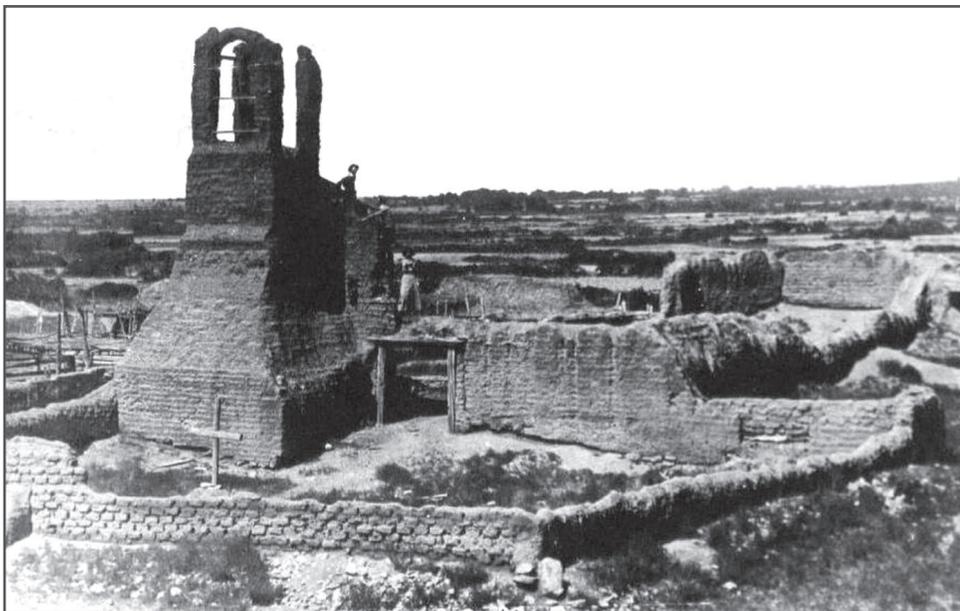
Almighty God have mercy on your soul. (St. George Cooke, p. 121)

In the days following Trujillo's trial, conviction, and sentence, the three other men indicted by the grand jury for treason, Pantaleón Archuleta of Los Luceros, Trinidad Barcelo of Santa Fe, and Pedro Vigil of Trampas, were also brought to trial for conspiring to wage war against the United States. However, these three trials resulted in hung juries, and by the time court adjourned in early May, charges against all three were dropped.

The reason for this turn of events is unclear. However, it seems to stem from an appeal by Trujillo's attorney that questioned the authority of an American court to try a Mexican citizen

pardoned. Since there is no record of any official action taken by Colonel Price in the matter of Trujillo's execution, or a burial record that would have presumably followed such an execution, all indications are Price subsequently exercised the pardon informally and ordered Trujillo released.

Several histories of the period support this conclusion. Thomas Hart Benton, the long-serving Senator from Missouri who was in a position to know these things, wrote that a pardon presented a quandary for President Polk. Since the court that convicted Trujillo clearly had "no jurisdiction for treason," a pardon would have meant the United States government supported "the legality of the condemnation," and if no pardon was issued



"Ruins at Old San Geronimo Church, Pueblo of Taos." Johnson Studio postcard, Dawson, NM. Robert J. Torrez collection

for treason. Within days of Trujillo's conviction and sentence, a number of individuals became convinced Trujillo was "a proper subject for the mercy of the government," and joined a petition to the President of the United States requesting a suspension of the sentence and pardon for Trujillo.<sup>14</sup>

A diligent search has found no primary evidence that Trujillo was either hanged or directly pardoned by President Polk. After Secretary of War W. L. Marcy acknowledged it was probably not "proper use of the legal term" to convict Mexican citizens as traitors to the United States, he apparently authorized Colonel Price, as military governor, to use his own discretion whether Trujillo should be

and the execution proceeded, this action would "subject [Trujillo] to murder." According to Benton, a compromise was reached by which Trujillo was simply turned loose.<sup>15</sup> Twenty-five other persons being held prisoner in Santa Fe were also discharged at this time, according to one official, "for want of testimony to indict them for treason."<sup>16</sup>

These conclusions are supported by the (St. Louis) *Missouri Republican* of 17 July 1847. In an article printed under the title "Interesting News From Santa Fe," the paper reported letters and apparent firsthand news from persons recently arrived from Santa Fe, among whom a Mr. Murphy and Colonel Russell are named. One of these letters,

dated May 22, says that Colonel Sterling Price had received instructions from the War Department (probably referring to Secretary of War W. L. Marcy) in which President Polk had “refused to sanction” any of General Kearny’s actions regarding the conferring of citizenship to the residents of New Mexico. On the strength of these instructions, Colonel Price “officially demanded the release and remission of the sentence of Antonio María Trujillo, convicted of treason against the government of the United States. The accused was thereupon set at liberty.”

### **Insurrectionists Tried for Murder**

Meanwhile, more than forty men, possibly the ones captured with Tomás Romero and Pablo Montoya that past February, were still being held prisoner at Taos. To deal with these, a civil court convened there on April 5. Judge Charles Beaubien, whose son, José Narcisco Beaubien, was one of the men killed in Taos at the onset of the revolt on January 19, was to preside. That first day, a grand jury convened with George Bent, brother of the recently assassinated governor, serving as foreman. Among the first indictments were Polio Salazar and Francisco “Rovali” [Ulibarri], who were determined to have exercised a leadership role in the insurrection and charged with “high treason” against the United States. On April 7, Beaubien’s court convicted Polio Salazar of treason and sentenced him to hang. Ironically, Francisco Ulibarri, the other person indicted with Salazar for treason, was acquitted of the charge a few days later. Ulibarri’s acquittal and Antonio María Trujillo’s earlier release give Polio Salazar the dubious distinction of being the only person actually executed for treason as a result of the events which have become known as the “Treason Trials of 1847.”

At least sixteen of the other prisoners held at Taos were somehow singled out, and in a change of legal tactics, possibly because by now the court had realized it had no jurisdiction for treason, indicted them for murder in the January 19 killing of Governor Bent and other American officials. On April 7, the same day Polio Salazar was convicted of treason, five others—José Manuel García, Pedro Lucero, Juan Ramón Trujillo, Manuel Romero, and Isidro Romero—were tried and convicted of murder, and sentenced to hang with Salazar on April 9.<sup>17</sup>

Official records provide no details of the April 9 executions that took the lives of Salazar and his five companions. Catholic Church burial records simply tell us that the Reverend Antonio José Martínez, the famous Padre Martínez of Taos, buried five of the six the same day they were hanged. The individual burial entries note that after receiving the last Sacraments of the Church, each “died by judicial sentence.”<sup>18</sup>

The most complete account of the events of that fateful day of April 9 comes from Lewis H. Garrard’s book, *Wah-To-Yah and The Taos Trail*. Garrard’s eyewitness story describes the last hours of the condemned men and their final walk from the jail to a gallows erected on a field north of Don Fernando’s plaza. As the prisoners and their military guard neared the gallows, a wagon was driven under a crossbeam that had been fastened to two upright poles. The six condemned men were positioned carefully on a thick plank placed across the rear of the wagon. The men were so close together, Garrard noted, “they touched.” After the ropes were adjusted around their necks, each was allowed to say a few words to the sparse crowd that gathered.

After the condemned men bade each other farewell, the wagon was driven out from under them. Their bodies swayed back and forth, bumping against each other as they struggled against their bonds and slowly strangled to death. For a moment, two of the men managed to grasp hands and held on to each other in a desperate grip, until unconsciousness, and then death, overtook them.<sup>19</sup> One wonders if these two were Manuel Antonio Romero and Isidro Antonio Romero. Burial records show they both were from the nearby mountain settlement of Los Dolores and may have been cousins, if not brothers.<sup>20</sup>

On April 12, three days after Padre Martínez buried Polio Salazar and his companions, the appalling spectacle of the executions prompted Martínez to send a runner to Santa Fe with two letters. The first was addressed to Manuel Álvarez, a prominent merchant and United States Consul at the capital. Padre Martínez informed Álvarez that Charles Beaubien, the presiding judge, seemed intent on killing everyone in Taos. The events of the past months, he noted, had already deprived many households of their men, and if the executions continued there would soon be no one left to work

and plant fields at this critical time of the year. Padre Martínez pleaded with Álvarez to accompany the runner when he delivered the other letter to Colonel Sterling Price, and to do what he could to put a stop to the suffering at Taos.<sup>21</sup>

Padre Martínez's second letter was addressed to Colonel Price. It is a poignant appeal for mercy and a condemnation of the proceedings in Taos. He noted that the trials were being held in English because the prosecuting and defense attorneys did not speak Spanish, and that the juries consisted of "a class of ignorant men . . . tainted with passion." The trials and executions at Taos, he concluded, had deteriorated into a "frightful spectacle. . ."<sup>22</sup> There is no record of Price's response, and the trials and executions at Taos continued.

The extant court records show there were ten additional convictions for murder before court adjourned at Taos. All ten received sentences of death by hanging. Nine of this group, Francisco Naranjo, José Gabriel Samora, Juan Domingo Martín, Juan Antonio Lucero, Manuel Sandoval, Rafael Tafoya, Juan Pacheco, Manuel Miera, and another identified only as El Cuervo, were sentenced to hang on April 30. Juan Antonio Ávila was scheduled to hang on May 7. Catholic Church burial records for Taos, however, confirm only the burials of Manuel Sandoval and Rafael Tafoya from this group.<sup>23</sup>

There is no extant official record of these final ten executions. However, William B. Drescher, one of the Missouri Volunteers who had marched to New Mexico with General Kearny in August 1846, has left us his account of the nine men sentenced to hang on April 30. His memoir tells us these nine men consisted of five Indians from the Pueblo of Taos and four Mexicans. Two gallows were erected for this occasion—a large one for the five Indians and a smaller one for the four Mexicans. The condemned men were loaded on wagons and "with ropes around their necks" driven under the gallows. Drescher continued, "The ropes [were] adjusted to gallows and the teams started forward—the gallows shrieked [sic] and the spirits of the unfortunate passed into that world where a merciful Judge reingnes [sic] ever. . ."<sup>24</sup>

We have no documentation that shows if Ávila was executed as scheduled on May 7. However, there is no reason to believe he was spared the fate of those hanged before that date. If the

hangings were carried out as scheduled, these last ten condemnations brought the total number of executions from the April 1847 Taos trials to seventeen.<sup>25</sup>

### More Harsh Reprisals

With the closing of court at Taos on 24 April 1847, it appeared New Mexico's harsh introduction to American jurisprudence was over. But the summer of 1847 brought more tragedy. In early July 1847, the bodies of a Lieutenant Brown and two enlisted men were discovered near Los Valles, a settlement now known as Los Valles de San Agustín, about twenty miles south of Las Vegas. Suspicion immediately fell upon the residents of this isolated community and, warranted or not, reprisals were quick. On or about 6 July 1847, a detachment of American troops descended on Los Valles and literally erased the community from the face of the earth. Within hours at least six of Los Valles' townsmen lay dead, and nearly every building in the village was destroyed. At least forty men were taken prisoner and marched to Santa Fe to stand trial for killing Lieutenant Brown and his men.<sup>26</sup>

On July 26 Colonel Price convened a "drumhead court martial" to try those suspected of killing Lieutenant Brown and his men. The court transcript does not specify how it was determined which of the forty or so persons being held prisoner would stand trial for murder, but on July 27 seven were singled out. Of this group, Manuel Alvarado was acquitted and presumably released, but the other six were convicted and sentenced to hang.<sup>27</sup> The executions of José Tomás Duran, George Rodríguez, Manuel Saens, Pedro Martín, Carpio Martín, and Dionicio Martín were carried out on 3 August 1847. A witness noted that as the Los Valles men were hanged, all the church bells in Santa Fe "went into motion with the solemn knell." The burial entries of the Los Valles men note each died "*ejecutado por la justicia, en la tribulación de la orca.*"<sup>28</sup> The tolling of Santa Fe's church bells sounded the end of the events we generally associate with the "Revolt" and "Treason Trials" of 1847.

During January and February 1847, three hundred or more New Mexicans were killed in the battles associated with the insurrection. Between February and August, survivors witnessed the conviction and execution of twenty-one of their countrymen for murder, one for treason, and

another on the dubious charge of fomenting “rebellious conduct.” The death of so many in so short a time provided an ample demonstration of General Kearny’s early warning that armed resistance to the Americans was futile.

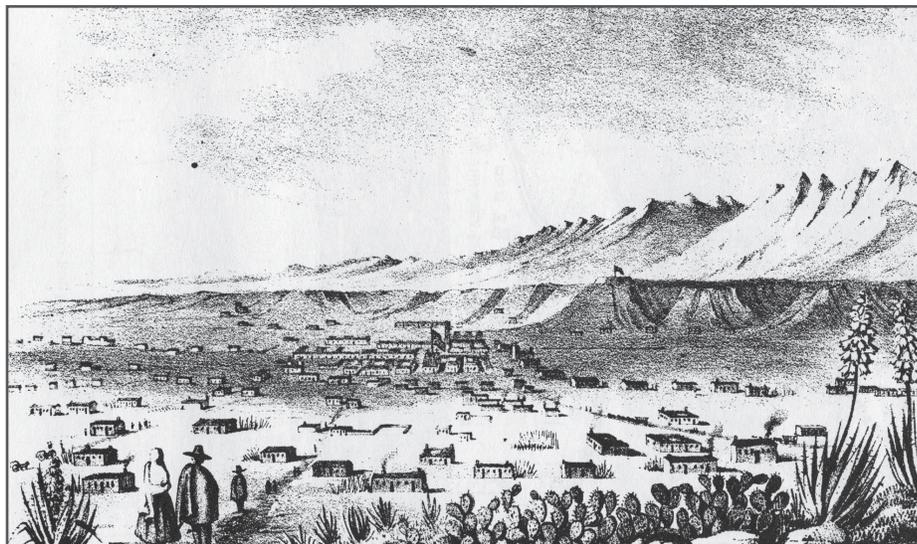
The events of this traumatic period in New Mexico history seemed to have carried serious implications. The ruins of the old San Geronimo Church where the insurrectionists made their last stand remain as evidence that the Pueblo of Taos incurred severe damage during the assault. The communities of Mora and Los Valles were in ruins, and the villages around Santa Cruz and along the valley of Embudo were likely deserted. In addition to the dead, there were undoubtedly scores seriously impaired by wounds. Dozens of widows and possibly hundreds of orphans were left without proper care and support. As Padre Martínez noted in his letter to Colonel Price, this great loss of men as spring approached certainly impacted the ability of several northern New Mexico communities to plant the crops needed for their subsistence. Perhaps some day an enterprising student will take a close look at the U.S. census for 1850 and see if at that time there were an inordinate number of families headed by women in the counties of Rio Arriba, Taos, and Mora.

### **Consequences and Conclusions**

It is also probable that these events influenced the manner in which New Mexican juries subsequently approached their duties after New Mexico was formally annexed to the United States of America, when the Treaty of Guadalupe

Hidalgo was signed in 1848. For several decades following the American occupation, New Mexico’s territorial officials were often puzzled and frustrated by the difficulty with which courts obtained convictions in capital crimes. In 1857, New Mexico Governor Abraham Rencher described a “general unwillingness of local juries to find a verdict in favor of the death penalty.”<sup>29</sup> In 1868, Judge Perry Brocchus also noted that New Mexican juries seemed to have a “natural and educational repugnance to convict for a crime punishable by death.”<sup>30</sup> As late as 1886, Elisha V. Long, one of territorial New Mexico’s most prominent jurists, commented in a letter to his wife that he was hearing a murder case in which he expected a verdict of guilty in the first degree. Since such a verdict carried a mandatory sentence of death by hanging in territorial New Mexico, Judge Long speculated that “the tender hearts of these Mexicans is likely to make it more merciful.”<sup>31</sup>

Capital punishment was not unknown in New Mexico during the Spanish colonial and Mexican periods, but, contrary to popular belief, it was not common. We may never know for certain why New Mexico’s juries were reluctant to condemn men to death, but the reluctance described by early judges seems most apparent in the four counties—Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, Mora and Taos—that suffered the greatest impact of the Revolt of 1847. It is possible that the harsh introduction to American jurisprudence in 1847 lingered in the memory of northern New Mexicans. Mora County, for example, had no legal executions during the entire



*Santa Fe as it appeared just after the American occupation. From Lt. J. W. Abert’s report, 1847.*

territorial period, while Santa Fe had only two during the first forty years of American territorial government. It may be significant that these two Santa Fe executions, which took place in 1849 and 1860, involved individuals named Andrew Jackson Simms and Thaddeus Rogers. Santa Fe did not witness the execution of a Spanish-surnamed person until 1895. Taos, the site of the revolt's bloodiest battle and most ruthless administration of justice, witnessed only one execution between 1848 and 1906—and that was for an 1864 conviction orchestrated by Kirby Benedict, who was arguably territorial New Mexico's most colorful judge.<sup>32</sup>

We know too little about the motives of the men who decided to take up arms against the Americans in 1847. So far, the documentation shows only that many suffered terribly for having done so. We will have to wait until the documentary record uncovers more facts before deciding whether individual actions were based on patriotism, hate, fear, or some other reason. History has demonstrated that the descendants of these men, as a group, have remained steadfastly loyal to the United States. Yet, history has labeled, and continues to label, those who participated in these tragic events of 1847 as rebels and traitors, despite the belatedly acknowledged fact that the courts convened in Taos and Santa Fe had no authority to condemn Mexican citizens for treason against the United States.

Many additional questions await answers. Questions apply not only to the individuals who participated and died in the insurrection, but to those New Mexicans who cooperated with and supported the new American government. What were the motives of the seven Spanish-surnamed individuals who are listed in the muster of the volunteer company raised by Ceran St. Vrain? Two of these individuals, Nicolás Pino and Manuel Chávez, achieved prominence in the subsequent affairs of territorial New Mexico, and seem to be the same persons who were among those arrested as conspirators that previous December. Did they serve willingly and fight against their fellow New Mexicans? Or is it, as has been suggested by some sources, that they were forced to accompany St. Vrain so the Americans could keep an eye on them? What of the other men recruited by St. Vrain? St. Vrain was a naturalized Mexican citizen; were other members of his company naturalized Mexican citizens? As such, why has history not counted them

as traitors to their adopted country? How about the men who served on the various juries that convicted and condemned so many of their neighbors? We know their names, as they are named in the jury lists. And, of some consequence, why was there no apparent material support for the insurrection from the *rio abajo*, or southern region of New Mexico?

It remains clear that our history books have treated the persons involved in these events anonymously, possibly in the hope that they remain so. Men of influence who wrote of these events soon after they occurred used derogatory terms to describe those who took up arms against the United States in January 1847. A newspaper report of a dance given by Colonel Sterling Price, at the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe on the first anniversary of the battle at Taos, described the occasion as a celebration of the "complete extinction of the band of murderers who under the pretense of patriotism killed and robbed so many defenseless innocents."<sup>33</sup> A. B. Dyer, writing about the trial and execution of the Los Valles group in August 1847, alluded to these men, and New Mexicans in general, as "miserable, ignorant, deluded wretches. . . ." Dyer continued, "and the mass of the people are so degraded, and have been so long under that kind of despotism, that they are wholly unfit to be citizens of a free government."<sup>34</sup> A generation later, Territorial Secretary William G. Ritch, in his eloquent 1877 eulogy of Donaciano Vigil, described the events leading up to the assassination of Governor Charles Bent in January 1847 and alluded to the "discontent and dissensions among the Pueblos and the more ignorant and vicious classes in remote districts."<sup>35</sup> More recently, Fray Angélico and Thomas Chávez dismissed these Mexican patriots as little more than "young hot-headed *caballeros* who had declined to swear allegiance to the new country. . . ."<sup>36</sup>

There are many more such characterizations of New Mexicans through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many of them used to justify New Mexico's many failures to achieve statehood. When painted with such vicious descriptions, no wonder these men quickly became and have remained undeserving of and bereft of any recognition or honor for more than a century and a half. .

It may now be time to suggest that instead of the disgraceful anonymity in which these events have been held by history, we now dare to consider

whether the events of December 1846 and January 1847 should even be called a “revolt.” Would “insurrection” or “resistance” be more appropriate? It may be time to face the challenge of considering that the men and women who died resisting the American invasion those fateful days in 1847 should be worthy of being remembered and honored, not as rebels and traitors, but as Mexican patriots who died defending their country.

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## NOTES

1 *Message from the President of the United States In Answer to a Resolution of the House of Representatives of the 15<sup>th</sup> Instant, Relative to the Occupation of the Mexican Territory*, 29th Cong., 2d sess., 1846, H. Doc. 19, serial 499, 19 [hereafter H. Doc. 19, serial 499].

2 “Brigadier General Stephen Watts Kearny, proclamation to New Mexicans on U.S. takeover, 22 August 1846,” Twitchell no. 1113, microfilm roll 6, frame 119, Spanish Archives of New Mexico I, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives (NMSRCA), Santa Fe [hereafter Twitchell no., frame number, roll number, SANM I].

3. RI 241, Microfilm roll 3, no frame number. William G. Ritch Collection, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Translation from the original is by the author. A transcript and translation of a slightly different version of the speech is found in Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *The History of the Military Occupation of the Territory of New Mexico* (Chicago: Rio Grande Press, 1963), 75–77.

4 Twitchell no. 1113, f. 119, r. 6, SANM I.

5 “Aviso al Publico,” 3 (?) September 1846. microfilm roll 98, frame 5, Series 11 Records of the Territorial Governors, 1846-1912, Territorial Archives of New Mexico, NMSRCA, Santa Fe [hereafter f. no., r. no., RTG 11-TANM].

6 H. Doc. 19, serial 499, 26. A printed version is also found in roll 98, frame 4s (s) number, roll number, RTG 11-TANM.

7 “Governor Charles Bent, proclamation re: curfew and business hours to be observed by citizens of Santa Fe,” Folder 124, Box 3, Donaciano Vigil Collection, NMSRCA, Santa Fe.

8 *Insurrection Against the Military Government in New Mexico and California, 1847 and 1848*, 56th Cong.,

1st sess., 1900, S. Doc. 442, serial 3878, 6 [hereafter S. Doc. 442, serial 3878]; Judge Joab Houghton to U.S. Marshall Richard Dallan, 25 December 1846. U.S. District Court Records, Federal Records Center, Denver, Colorado. 1st. Judicial District, New Mexico, Criminal Case Files, 1847 -1865.

9 S. Doc. 442, serial 3878, 6-7.

10 S. Doc. 442, serial 3878, 8-13. Details of the campaign and subsequent battles are derived principally from Sterling Price’s report and its supporting documents. The muster roll of St. Vrain’s company is in roll 85, frames 5-6.f. no., r. no., Series 7 Records of the Adjutant General of the Territory, 1847-1911, TANM, NMSRCA. It is also printed in “Captain Ceran St. Vrain’s Company New Mexico Mounted Volunteers,” EED, 52d Cong., 1st sess., 1892, H. Doc.1435, 1-7.

11 “Proceedings of a Drum Head Court Martial,” *Daily (St. Louis) Missouri Republican*, April 28, 1847.

12 *Daily (St. Louis) Missouri Republican*, April 28, 1847; S. Doc. 442, serial 3878 13; A.B. Dyer to Colonel George Talcott, 17 February 1847. New Mexico Letters and Diaries, NMSRCA 1959-137, Box 15817, folder 5.

13 Details of the “treason trials” are taken from Santa Fe County “Treason Trials” Warrant Book, 1847-1854, Santa Fe County N.M. Records, 1846-1999, NMSRCA; *United States v. Antonio María Trujillo*, 16 March 1847, U.S. District Court Records: New Mexico, Denver Federal Records Center, Denver, Colorado. Copy in History File #166, NMSRCA; *Message of the President of the United States, Transmitting, In Answer to Resolutions of the House of Representatives of July 10, 1848, Reports from the Secretaries of State, Treasury, War, and Navy*, 30th Cong., 1st sess., 1848, H. Doc. 70, serial 521, 24-27.

14 S. Doc. 442, serial 3878, 30-31.

15 Charles E. Magoon to The Secretary of War, May 31, 1900, “Insurrection...”, 5. Details of the request for a presidential pardon for Trujillo are in W. L. Marcy to Sterling Price, June 11, 1847 and June 26, 1847, “New Mexico and California—Message of the President of the United States,” 30<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. 1848, House of Rep. Exec. Doc. 70, serial 521, 31-33. It should also be noted that the *CIS Index to Presidential Executive Orders and Proclamations*, Index by Personal Name, Part I: April 30, 1789 to March 4, 1921, (Washington D. C.: Information Service,

Inc., 1987), has no listing for presidential action on Trujillo; Thomas H. Benton, *Thirty Years View, or, A History of the Working of the American Government for Thirty Years, from 1820 to 1850*, vol. 2 (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1903) 683; A similar conclusion is reached by John S. Jenkins, *History of the War Between the United States and Mexico: From the Commencement of Hostilities to the Ratification of the Treaty of Peace* (Auburn: Derby and Miller, 1851), 331.

16 S. Doc. 442, serial 3878, 30-31.

17 Taos County District Court Journal (Record), 1847-1851, Records of the United States Territorial and New Mexico District Court for Taos County, NMSRCA 1976-014.

18 R. 42, Taos Burials, 1843-1850 (Bur[ial] - 41), Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe (AASF), Santa Fe, New Mexico [hereafter r. number, AASF (Bur-41)].

19 Lewis H. Garrard, *Wah-To-Yah and the Taos Trail* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955), 196-198.

20 R. 42, AASF (Bur-41).

21 Antonio José Martínez to Manuel Alvarez, 12 April 1847, folder 182, series 1, Benjamin M. Read Collection, NMSRCA.

22 Antonio José Martínez to Col. Sterling Price, 12 April 1847, f.(s) number, r. number, RTG 11-TANM.

23 R. 42, AASF (Bur-41),.

24 William B. Drescher, Journal (no date), New Mexico Letters and Diaries, NMSRCA 1959-137, Box 15819, folder 63. Misc. Diaries and Journals, NMSRCA.

25 Pablo Montoya, Polio Salazar, the five executed with him, and the subsequent 10 convicted for murder.

26 Twitchell, *History of the Military Occupation*, 146; Donaciano Vigil to Prefect of San Miguel del Vado, 7 July and 8 July 1847, f. 77-78(s) number, r. 98 number, RTG 11-TANM. "Additional News From Santa Fe," *Daily Missouri Republican* (St. Louis), August 13, 1847; Jacqueline Dorgan Meketa, "A Soldier in New Mexico, 1847-1848," *New Mexico Historical Review* 66, no. 1 (1991): 19.

27 "Sterling Price, Order No. 221, July 26, 1847," and "Order No. 223, July 31, 1847," Orders and Special

Orders, Vol. 43 1/2, Army of New Mexico, 1847, 9th Military Department, 11 June 1847 - 15 August 1847. National Archives Microfilm.

28 J.N. Dunlap Journal, August 3, 1847. New Mexico Letters and Diaries, NMSRCA 1959-137, Box 15817, folder 4. A.B. Dyer to Colonel George Talcott, 11 August 1847. New Mexico Letters and Diaries, NMSRCA 1959-137, box 15817, folder 5. ; and "Additional News From Santa Fe," *Daily Missouri Republican* (St. Louis), August 13, 1847; R. 41, AASF (Bur-53).

29 Abraham Rencher to Howell Bobb, 30 November 1857, f. no. r. no. RTG 11-TANM.

30 "The Rio Arriba District Court," *The Daily New Mexican* (Santa Fe), May 5, 1868.

31 Elisha V. Long to Mrs. Long, 21 May 1886, folder 558-574, Family Papers, Elisha V. Long Papers, Elisha V. and Boaz W. Long Papers Collection, NMSRCA. Despite Judge Long's doubts, the jury in this case rendered a guilty verdict and sentenced Theodore Baker to hang. See Robert J. Tórrrez, *Myth of the Hanging Tree* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), 71-80.

32 See Tórrrez, *Myth of the Hanging Tree*, 155-157.

33 "La Baile [sic]," *El Republicano* (Santa Fe, NM), February 12, 1848.

34 A. B. Dyer to Talcott, 11 August 1847. NMSRCA. New Mexico Letters and Diaries, NMSRCA 1959-137, box 15817, folder 5.

35 William G. Ritch, "Death of Hon. Donaciano Vigil: Proclamation by the Governor," 11 August 1877, Records of the Secretary of the Territory, 1851-1911, Executive Record Book No. 2, 25 July 1867-8 Nov. 1882. f. 476-479 no. r.21o. RTG 11-TANM

36 Fray Angélico Chávez and Thomas E. Chávez, *Wake for A Fat Vicar* (Albuquerque: LPD Press, 2004), 76.

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**ROBERT J. TÓRREZ**, a native New Mexican, served as the New Mexico State Historian from 1987 until his retirement in 2000. He has published widely on a broad variety of topics related to New Mexico history. His publications include *UFOs Over Galisteo* (University of New Mexico Press, 2004), *Myth of the Hanging Tree* (University of New Mexico Press, 2008), and *Rio Arriba, A New Mexico County* (Rio Grande Press, 2010).

## In Memoriam: LARRY CASTILLO-WILSON, 1947–2013

We are saddened to report the recent loss of Larry Castillo-Wilson of Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Larry is survived by his wife of forty-three years, Rosa Castillo-Wilson, a son, a daughter, grandchildren, and other family members. According to the obituary in the *Albuquerque Journal* (June 14, 2013), "Throughout his life, Larry enjoyed historical research, writing poetry, and bike riding. He was a loving father, husband, and friend to all."

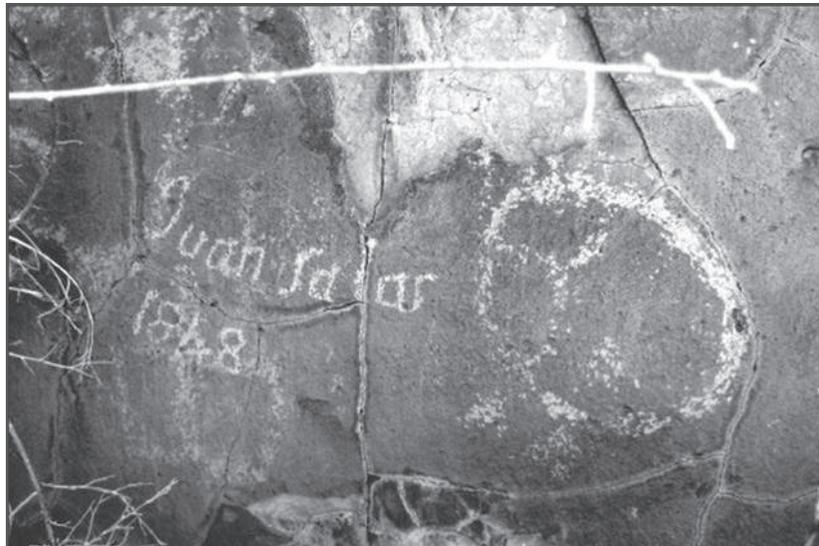
Since CARTA's founding, Larry was a loyal and active member, who generously shared his original research with *Chronicles of the Trail*. His last article, "Snowshoes in the Desert: Reverend John Dyer on El Camino Real," was published in the Winter/Spring 2013 issue.

*From John Porter Bloom, August 9, 2013:*

The Reverend Larry Castillo-Wilson passed away on June 11 at age 65, much too soon. He was one of a kind. Dedicated and enthusiastic, these qualities were exemplified in his fine article, "Mystery and Discovery along El Camino Real," in the Winter 2011 *Chronicles*. More than amateurish fervor stirred him, however. He was determined to uncover nitty-gritty truth in the field and also in conventional research, and to share his discoveries with all. Larry spoke of deriving inspiration from studies with NM Tech Professor Paige Christiansen (now long retired), of looking out the professor's office window and talking with him about early travelers of long ago but not so far away. I was so pleased to get Larry and Paige together for a brief reunion when CARTA met in Las Cruces in 2009. We know Larry left other writings behind, and hope that they can be shared in the future with *Chronicles* readers.

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"Pastor, poet, writer, actor, historian, historic trail researcher, husband, father, friend, humorist and teaser."—*from Larry's business card, 2012.*



*Larry found this signature, "Juan Salas 1848," etched into a wall of historic and prehistoric petroglyphs near Polvadera, New Mexico. His story about this discovery was published in Winter 2011 *Chronicles*. Photograph by L. Castillo-Wilson.*

# THE MAGOFFIN HOME STATE HISTORIC SITE

By Leslie Bergloff

A trip to El Paso is incomplete without a visit to the Magoffin Home State Historic Site. Built around 1875 by Joseph and Octavia Magoffin, this unique adobe home stands as a tribute to the rich cultural heritage found along the border. The home is open



*Joseph Magoffin*  
(1837–1923).

six days a week and visitors from all over the world come to experience what life was like in the past. As you tour the Magoffin Home, you will encounter the story of a multicultural family who influenced the development of the Southwest borderlands.

Magoffin family members actively participated in American expansion, West Texas settlement, trade on the Santa Fe/Chihuahua Trails, Civil War turmoil, military service, and U.S.-Mexico relations. The Magoffin Home is El Paso's only house museum and one of the most unusual buildings in the state of Texas.

When Joseph and Octavia Magoffin moved into their new adobe home in 1877, El Paso was a small frontier town. Joseph, a politician and civic leader, built the home on property he had obtained from his late father. The adobe construction reflects the Southwestern fusion of Spanish architecture with the Territorial Style that was influenced by the Greek Revival popular in other parts of the United States. The homestead, surrounded by orchards and gardens, became a well-known social center in the community.

The original home had six rooms and a large hall, with an outbuilding of three rooms. Over time, seven more rooms were added, connecting the two buildings and creating the enclosed courtyard that exists today. The home and its furnishings reflect over one hundred years of continuous use by the Magoffins and their descendants. The home retains many of the lovely furnishings and decorative arts enjoyed by generations of family members. The Magoffin Home is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Magoffin family history intersects with the

history of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro in many ways, although the home itself is not located on the trail. Joseph's father, James Wiley Magoffin (1799–1868), left his family home in Kentucky and went to Mexico in the 1820s. He became a well-respected businessman and a trader on the Chihuahua-Santa Fe Trail beginning in the 1830s, handling the Mexican side of the business while his brother Samuel worked the American side. [The section of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro from Chihuahua



*Octavia McGrael*  
*Magoffin* (1845–1906).

City to Santa Fe was known as the Chihuahua Trail during the nineteenth century—ed.] James Wiley Magoffin was very active from 1832–1848 arranging trade caravans back and forth between Chihuahua, Santa Fe and Missouri. He was well acquainted with other traders of the time period including Josiah Gregg, James Harrison, the Glasgow brothers, and Gabriel Valdés. Magoffin eventually married María Gertrudis Valdés a woman of Spanish-Mexican descent in Chihuahua. The couple had eight children, all of whom were born in Mexico. Around 1843 James purchased the Harmon Gregg homestead outside of Independence, Missouri, and moved his family to the United States. Though the children might have accompanied their father on other trading excursions, this may have been the first time the entire family traveled the Santa Fe Trail together to their new home in Independence.

Devastated by the death of María Gertrudis soon after their arrival, the children were sent away to school, to other family members, or were cared for by their aunts while their father continued his work. By 1846, as he assembled another caravan to travel to Santa Fe, James was enlisted by the United States government as an envoy to Manuel Armijo, the Mexican governor of New Mexico. Magoffin was sent ahead of the caravan with U.S. troops to help convince Armijo to give up Santa Fe without fighting as the U.S. Army invaded Mexico. It is

unknown what type of influence he was able to exert, but Armijo ordered his troops to abandon Santa Fe and fled south down the Chihuahua Trail. In the caravan with his own wagons were also the wagons of his brother Samuel and his new bride, Susan Shelby Magoffin. Susan kept a diary about her experiences during this trip that is widely read even today. James headed south on the Chihuahua Trail ahead of the caravan, was arrested by Mexican authorities, and put in prison until the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848.

After the war, James made extensive land purchases along the Rio Grande and created the settlement of Magoffinsville, a forerunner of present-day El Paso and an early site of Fort Bliss. Here he built a flourishing mercantile business that lasted until the outbreak of the Civil War. Floods destroyed his hacienda and trading post, located about eleven blocks east of the Magoffin Home, in 1867. In 1868, James Wiley Magoffin died in San Antonio leaving all of his property to his only living son, Joseph.

After attending schools in Kentucky and Missouri, Joseph Magoffin (1837–1923) first came to the El Paso area in 1856 to work in his father’s mercantile. After service in the Civil War, he returned with his new wife and son and soon became an advocate for the development of El Paso and the region. Using his extensive landholdings, he helped bring railroads, utilities and new businesses to town. He was a co-founder of the State National Bank, served as county judge, four terms as Mayor, Collector of Customs, and in numerous other public offices. His wife, Octavia (1845–1906), was a social leader in the community and active in Catholic charities. The couple was well known for their hospitality and entertained guests frequently in their home. Early travelers and settlers to the area often stayed with the Magoffins.

The Magoffins embraced their cultural diversity and successfully blended their family traditions and customs in much the same ways that we do



*Parlor, Magoffin Home, El Paso, Texas.*

today. Spanish was Joseph’s first language like many people in the borderlands. As a young man he learned to speak English and his ability to communicate in both languages served him well in his work as a public official. Joseph’s stepmother, Dolores Valdés Magoffin, and other members of the

Valdés family lived in Juárez for many years and the Magoffins often visited to shop and attend church together, as many families do today. The Magoffins embraced the unique culture they found in El Paso and worked to make a positive impact on their community. We are the recipients of their legacy. You are invited to come and learn more about their fascinating story!

Tours of the Magoffin Home are given on the hour Tuesday–Sunday from 9 a.m.–5 p.m. For more information, please see [www.visitmagoffinhome.com](http://www.visitmagoffinhome.com) or call (915) 533-5147.



*Exterior, Magoffin Home, El Paso, Texas.*

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*Photographs courtesy Magoffin Home State Historic Site.*

**LESLIE BERGLOFF** is a public historian who has worked in Southern New Mexico and El Paso, Texas, to help preserve the history of the area. She is currently employed by the Texas Historical Commission and serves as the Site Manager at the Magoffin Home State Historic Site.

# EL PASO MISSION TRAIL: YSLETA, SOCORRO, AND SAN ELIZARIO

By Janine Young

*Following the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, the Spanish colonists and some members of the Tigua and Piro tribes fled south along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro to El Paso del Norte (Ciudad Juárez) and established the mission churches of Socorro del Sur and Ysleta del Sur nearby. Further east, near the spot where Juan Oñate and his colonizing party had crossed the Rio Grande in 1598, the San Elizario presidio chapel was built a century later. Today, Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario comprise the designated El Paso Mission Trail along a nine-mile segment of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro.—ed.*

## History

El Paso's three historic Spanish colonial churches—Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario—are located at the southernmost point of the United States' portion of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. They have functioned as the religious and social centers of their communities virtually uninterrupted since their founding in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, making them the oldest settled areas of El Paso.

The two missions and the presidio chapel serve as living symbols of Hispanic and Native American heritage in Texas and the Southwest. The El Paso area is one of the earliest centers of Hispanic life and culture in the United States. On April 28, 1598, Juan Oñate, the colonists, and members of the local Manso tribe enjoyed a feast in celebration of reaching the Rio Grande—arguably the “First Thanksgiving” in present-day United States.

The Mission Trail churches serve as important heritage tourism destinations for the Mission Valley. All three are Texas Historic Sites and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are

owned and operated by the Diocese of El Paso, which makes the missions accessible for tourism, even as they remain centers of parish community life.

The oldest of the El Paso mission churches is Ysleta Mission, located in the community of Ysleta, within the city limits of El Paso, and part of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish. [See p. 3—ed.] The parish was established in 1680 and the mission was completed in 1682. The Spanish originally named the church *Misión de Corpus Christi de la Ysleta del Sur*, but it also has been known as *Misión de San Antonio de la Ysleta del Sur*, in honor of the patron saint of the Tiguas, who have worshipped at the parish since its beginnings, and still do today. In 1740 the Rio Grande washed away the original



*Socorro del Sur Mission Church, c. 1905, Courtesy Diocese of El Paso.*

church and settlers began construction of the new mission in 1744. The layout of the Ysleta Mission is an example of the New Mexican style of mission churches that were built during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, characterized by their linear, boxlike forms, with simple exterior decoration. In 1907 the church was partially destroyed during a fire, but was reconstructed with the addition of a three-story tower incorporating traditional Spanish mission decorations. Today, the parish has nearly 1,200 registered families.

*Nuestra Señora de la Concepción del Socorro* is located in the town of Socorro. The Socorro Mission was established in October 1680. Flooding caused by the Rio Grande twice forced the community to rebuild the mission, the third and final one completed in 1848. The mission, constructed of adobe surfaced with stucco, is particularly notable for its interior. The finely painted *vigas*, or beams, contain decorations of the original Native American

builders and date from the first structure. Like the mission church of Ysleta, the layout, massing, details, and the use of decorative elements show a strong relationship to the building traditions of seventeenth-century Spanish colonial New Mexico. Today the Socorro Mission is part of La Purisima Parish, which has 660 registered families.

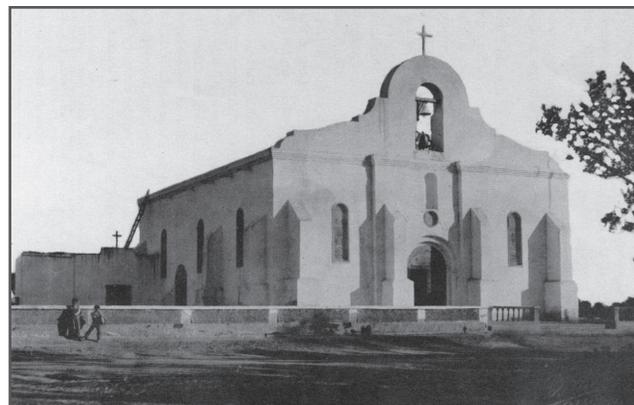
San Elizario (or Elceario) Mission, located in the town of San Elizario, was founded by the Spanish in 1789 as a presidio for troops stationed in the Mission Valley. U.S. troops were assigned to the fort in 1850, and during the Civil War volunteers from California were stationed here to prevent a reoccupation of the area by Confederate forces. The present Chapel of San Elizario was constructed in 1877 to replace the original one, which had been destroyed by a flood. The one-story chapel is built in the traditional Spanish Mission style. Today San Elizario Parish has 470 registered families.

### Preservation

The parish communities of Socorro, San Elizario and Ysleta are committed to preserving their historic churches. All three have undergone major renovations over their long histories, driven by the impermanence of the adobe walls.

Socorro Mission went through an extensive restoration effort between 2001 and 2004, when it was in danger of collapse. In collaboration with Cornerstones Community Partnerships, the Diocese of El Paso, Socorro Mission, and many community stakeholders came together to raise and invest more than two million dollars to make significant improvements to the interior and exterior of the adobe structure, ceiling, and floor.

More recently, San Elizario Mission re-plastered and repainted the entire exterior of the church while updating the roof and improving site drainage. When the bell tower threatened the collapse of the mission last year, they began extensive internal improvements, including repairing interior walls and restoring the ceiling and floors.



*San Elizario Presidio Chapel. Courtesy El Paso Public Library.*

Restoration at Ysleta Mission has been an ongoing effort, with important contributions from the Tigua Indians, who helped to repair and replace the church roof and update the church structure.

In collaboration with the three mission churches, the Foundation for the Diocese of El Paso is working to establish a permanent endowment fund to support the ongoing restoration and preservation of the Socorro, San Elizario and Ysleta Missions. The Foundation would fund improvements in conjunction with the Diocese of El Paso's Historic Missions Restoration, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization established to oversee construction improvements to the historic missions in concert with the parish administrators.

The Historic Missions Restoration would have two major goals:

Goal 1. Restore, preserve, and maintain the historic integrity of the missions in order to preserve them as significant cultural

landmarks for future generations by using materials and architectural styles that conform to the original structures.

Goal 2. Provide for the physical safety and comfort of parishioners and visitors.

The two mission churches of Ysleta and Socorro and the presidio chapel of San

Elizario, located along the El Paso Mission Trail, stand as enduring symbols of the long and rich history of their respective communities and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro.

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**JANINE YOUNG** is the Annual Appeal and Grants Director for the Foundation for the Diocese of El Paso, Inc. and has been with the Diocese since 2000. Janine holds a Master's degree in History from the University of New Mexico. Born in Indiana, she has been a longtime resident of El Paso and is a parishioner at St. Luke Parish. She is the author of the *Centennial History of the Diocese of El Paso* and writes a weekly column in the *El Paso Times* about the history of the Catholic Diocese.

# INTERVIEW: Nicolasa Chávez New World Cuisine along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro

By Catherine López Kurland

**CK: What is the subject of *New World Cuisine: The Histories of Chocolate, Mate y Más*?**

NC: It's about the global exchange of food, but I also localized it to New Mexico, and the effects of this food exchange on New Mexico.

**CK: Do you think New Mexicans are familiar with El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro?**

NC: Growing up with history in the family, I learned about it. However, the general New Mexican populace knows very little about the Trail. El Camino Real International Heritage Center, which opened in 2005, and CARTA's journal, *Chronicles of the Trail*, have helped to publicize it.

**CK: What is the connection between the exhibition and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro?**

NC: The exhibition shows what came in and what went out of New Mexico, and the Camino Real was the only way things were coming in or going out.

There was a network of trails, with the Camino Real being the mother road, and smaller trails branching off from there—the Camino Real was so much earlier than the overland trails to the West—to California. We also can think about the Manila Galleon Trade coming to the West Coast from Asia, but that started about 150 years later.

The first expeditions into New Mexico were in the 1540s, but whether they brought any foods or not, we don't know. But we do know that the first fields were planted with Oñate's *entrada* in 1598, and the first crops were harvested c. 1599–1600.

**CK: What crops did the first colonists plant?**

NC: We know that chile was one of the first crops. Dedie Snow writes about this in an article in which she tells of the first colonists complaining about

mice eating chile, and preferring it to cheese!<sup>1</sup> The first colonists complained about the four summer months, especially the monsoons, and that they often slept outdoors because of huge problems with bedbugs.

Chile was not part of the Old World cuisine; their Mediterranean diet was not spicy. But early colonists did plant it.

Also, from this quote about the mice we know that the colonists were bringing or producing cheese very early. The next reference to cheese was forty years later. They don't identify the type of cheese, or whether they produced it here or brought it up the Camino Real. They did bring goats and other livestock and could have produced it in New Mexico.

This one quote tells us that they were cultivating chile, one of the New World foods that they brought with them up the Camino Real. Now archeologists are studying whether there might have been chile in New Mexico before 1598, because of recent evidence that chocolate was here

almost one thousand years ago in huge quantities.

Why not chile? It grows well here. The prehistoric migration of chile and other foods from South America to Mesoamerica happened via humans and birds and animals. So why could this not have happened coming from Mesoamerica to New Mexico?

The big Columbian Exchange, the bringing of food items from Europe, from the Mediterranean, which in turn was influenced by the Islamic empire that ruled Spain for eight hundred years, had a significant culinary effect in the New World.

**CK: What were some of the Old and New World foods that the colonists brought with them on the Camino Real?**

NC: Spain had very rich palate of foods and spices

*They brought  
dried shrimp from  
Andalucia on the  
Camino Real.*

that the colonists brought along. These included cinnamon, cardamom, rosewater—used a lot— anise, (New and Old World anise are different plants), allspice (New World), and vanilla (New World). Many recipes included New and Old World ingredients. Chile was the most highly used spice. Drinking chocolate usually included it. The Spanish were looking for pepper, hence the name chile pepper, even though it's a different family from black pepper. The Spanish used chile as a dried spice. One of the great attributes of chile is that it can be eaten fresh or dried, and was a staple for the long hard New Mexico winters, which we know were much colder back then from reports of horses and carretas traveling on the frozen Rio Grande.

**CK: Can you tell us more about the Spanish diet and its origins?**

NC: Cortés arrived in the New World in 1519, and by 1530 they were already producing wine in Mesoamerica. By 1598 the Spanish or Creoles had adopted native culinary traditions and merged them with their own Iberian ones, including many from the Canary Islands, where there was a strong influence from North Africa—from Morocco.

The Spanish brought goats, oxen, rams, and sheep. At first sheep were a food source, but in time they were valued more for the wool, which became New Mexico's number one export. Lamb and mutton were not consumed nearly as much as *cabrito*, or goat meat.

Other foodstuffs could double as a dye or a medicine. For example, saffron, a prized ingredient in Spanish and Middle East cuisine, was also used medicinally and as a dye, and lavender and rosemary had valued roles in health, beauty, and medicine.

There was already an herbal tradition here. *Curanderismo* is a combination of Native American and Spanish traditions in New Mexico, Mexico, Central and South America. In fact, there are many notable parallels between the southwest United States and western Argentina—Mendoza and San Juan. They have snowfall from the Andes, vineyards in abundance, and herbal traditions from the Native Americans there. The Spanish brought lavender and rosemary to that region along with beef, as in Mesoamerica and New Mexico. Later, cattle really took off in Argentina, and beef became a major product and export there in the nineteenth century.



*Spanish Kitchen, Courtesy Museum of International Folk Art. Photo by Blair Clark.*

**CK: What were some of the other sources of protein?**

NC: Wild game, of course. In Spain, surrounded by the sea, fish was a principal part of the diet. Here fish was not available. Although Native Americans enjoyed fresh trout, it was not part of the colonists' food supply. They brought dried shrimp from Andalusia on the Camino Real.

**CK: What other foods did the Spanish bring?**

NC: Olive oil. There were no olive trees in the New World. Lard was the main source after the Spanish introduced pigs and brought them up the Camino Real. Garlic and onions were also essential parts of Spanish cuisine. They brought preserves and dried fruits—quince and peach being the most popular—which sustained them until the fruit trees that they planted here matured, or as reserves for nonproductive years.

**CK: Quince does not seem to be so popular now.**

NC: Quince was planted here in groves, but not now, although it is still a very popular crop in Spain, South America, and Mexico, where they make quince paste or *membrillo* or *dulce de membrillo*, and liqueur. There are still some quince trees in Albuquerque. My grandparents' generation recalls having had membrillo, but quince has died out, unlike berries, peaches, and apricots.

**CK: What about wine?**

NC: The earliest wine production in New Mexico was around 1629, in the south near El Paso. In Mexico they were producing wine in the Parras region in 1620, and even earlier in South America, in the 1530s.

Planting vineyards was an early mandate for the colonists. They were instructed to take clippings and seeds from wine grapes. Grapevines did well in some parts of the Americas, but in Mexico not south of Parras, Coahuila, which was the perfect setting for them. In fact, wine growing in that area has been huge since the 1970s and 1980s.

**CK: What about New Mexican wine?**

NC: For almost 200 years, from 1629 up to the early 1800s, wine grapes were grown near Socorro. During the late Territorial period, by the 1880s, New Mexico was the fifth largest wine-producing region in United States. There were vineyards near Socorro—in the Rio Abajo. San Felipe de Neri church in Albuquerque had a vineyard, and there were some in Corrales along the Rio Grande. The biggest threat was flooding.

**CK: How is wine presented in the exhibition?**

NC: The wine exhibit is one of my favorite parts. The photomural is from the Ponderosa Valley Winery, who also lent items to the show. Ponderosa owner Henry K. Street wrote a small book, first

published in 1997, *The History of Wine in New Mexico: 400 Years of Struggle*. The history of wine production in New Mexico is not at all well known.

Wine and grapes were imported from Spain because in 1585 the Spanish Crown outlawed production of wine in the New World, to prevent competition for the Andalusian wine growers. It wasn't legal to grow it, but there wasn't enough of the imported Spanish wine to fill the demand—the priests and wealthy kept it for themselves. Every three years wine was shipped from Spain to Veracruz, and forty-five gallons were transported along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro to New Mexico. Forty-five gallons of wine—not very much! How much was produced here? No one knows for certain.

**CK: What was the earliest wine to come up El Camino Real?**

NC: The first wine to come up the Camino Real was Angélica. It had an 18% alcohol content—a high sugar base to preserve it, similar to sherry. The earliest grapes were referred to as *criollo* (like "Creole"). It was a light shade of red, like a pinot noir, but sweeter. The *criollo* grapes were traded overland from New Mexico to California, where they were renamed "Mission" grapes.

*The show was a joy for me. I love food history—and chocolate, of course.*

**CK: You said that during the Territorial Period New Mexico was the fifth largest wine-growing region in the United States.**

NC: Yes. Records show that during the Territorial Period they were producing wine here. At this time, French, Italian, and German immigrants were moving into the territory, bringing new types of winemaking equipment, made possible by the railroad. This changed the way wine was made here, modernizing the production. Before then it was made in the traditional way as it had been since colonial days—stomping the grapes, and using rawhide wine vats and grape presses like the one in the exhibit.

**CK: Where did the wine press come from?**

NC: From MOIFA'S own collection, bringing up a bragging point: ninety percent of the exhibition is from our own collection.

**CK: Why did wine cease to be such an important New Mexican product in the twentieth century?**

NC: New competition from other regions, flooding, and, above all, prohibition.

**CK: What other beverages did the Spanish bring with them on the Camino?**

NC: Chocolate!

**CK: It was thrilling to behold the sherd with traces of cacao from one of the cylindrical jars found in Pueblo Bonito at Chaco Canyon—over one thousand years old! It was only a few years ago that Patricia Crown confirmed that these jars were used for drinking chocolate—probably ceremonial.**

NC: The Spaniards did not like chocolate at first. But it was a food—sustenance for soldiers. The Church debated whether or not it was a “food,” to determine if it was allowed during Lent. If it was a

drink made with water only, it could be consumed when fasting. It was a luxury item.

**CK: Were there other beverages, such as coffee or tea?**

NC: Spaniards did not drink coffee. Coffee was popular in northern Europe, the workingman's drink. Chocolate was associated with the Catholic Church. Chocolate was the drink of choice in New Mexico. At the *merienda*, a light meal that took place between lunch and dinner, locals sat on low cushions drinking chocolate. Visitors to New Mexico commented on this. They asked, “What are we being served?” Susan Magoffin, a young American bride, writes about it in her diary [1846–1848 —ed.] about traveling down the Santa Fe and Chihuahua trails—the popular name for the section between Santa Fe and Chihuahua. The Chihuahua Trade Fair was the biggest event of the year for New Mexicans.

**CK: What about tea?**

NC: They drank teas—cota, osha, and chamomile—as medicinal remedies.

**CK: How did the New World Cuisine evolve?**

NC: The New World is sometimes called “the Colonial laboratory.” They tried new things, new combinations. This was a time when medicine was concerned with alchemy and how the hot and cool properties of different foods affected the humors, the four fluids of the body.

They experimented with new ingredients—vanilla, flowers, herbs and much more.

We asked questions. What was here in New Mexico? What was imported? How much was reserved for the Church? The Manila Galleon Trade was highly regulated. It was supposed to go from the Philippines to Acapulco, then to Mexico City and taxed before it came to New Mexico. But how much contraband came into New Mexico?



*Micaceous Chocolatero, 13 <sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. × 12 in. Camilla Trujillo and René Zamora, Santa Fe, 2008. Courtesy Museum of International Folk Art, IFAF Collection. Photo by Blair Clark.*

**CK: I understand that you are a fourteenth-generation New Mexican. What are some of the traditional New Mexican foods that were passed down to you?**

NC: For holidays, there were always biscochitos, and empanaditas with mincemeat, traditionally made with cow's tongue—as a kid, I hated it. In the past they used all parts of the animal; nothing was wasted.

I have recipes from my great-grandmother, which my aunt is handing down to me.

In the exhibition there is a recipe exchange. We encourage everyone to contribute. We are getting recipes from all parts of the United States. For the technologically savvy, there is an online recipe exchange. Search on Facebook or on the museum's website: [www.internationalfolkart.org](http://www.internationalfolkart.org).

**CK: What programming will there be in association with New World Cuisine?**

NC: The show will be on view through January 5, 2014. On Sunday, September 15, there will be a Harvest Festival on Museum Hill with bread baking in an *horno*, *ristra* tying, and live music. Throughout the run of the show, the Museum Hill cafe is serving a special New World Cuisine platter.

**CK: I have tried the New World tasting-menu and highly recommend it. The corn flan was sublime.**

NC: On November 8–10 we are planning to have a three-day culinary conference with chefs, food historians, tastings, panel discussions, and more. The details will be on the museum website: [www.internationalfolkart.org](http://www.internationalfolkart.org).

**CK: What is the message for visitors to keep in mind?**

NC: Nothing happens in a vacuum. World history

is so much about cross-cultural communication and exchange. Here food and objects—cooking and serving utensils—tell the story of new ways of cooking and preparing food for both Native Americans and the Spanish colonists in New Mexico. It's a positive story, a lasting legacy—a bright side of the Encounter. It's about exchange, the blending of the Old and New Worlds. Take for example the tortilla: the flour tortilla with wheat from the Old World. We think of certain foods as traditional, such as a pork tamale, but before 1492 there was no beef or pork here, although there were tamales, as shown on Mayan jars.

The traditions brought by the Spanish came from cultures that were already mixed—many from the Islamic world—and then these were mixed with the native culture here. The Spanish botijas, or wine jars—came from the Roman amphora. At one time Spain was the capital of the Roman Empire.

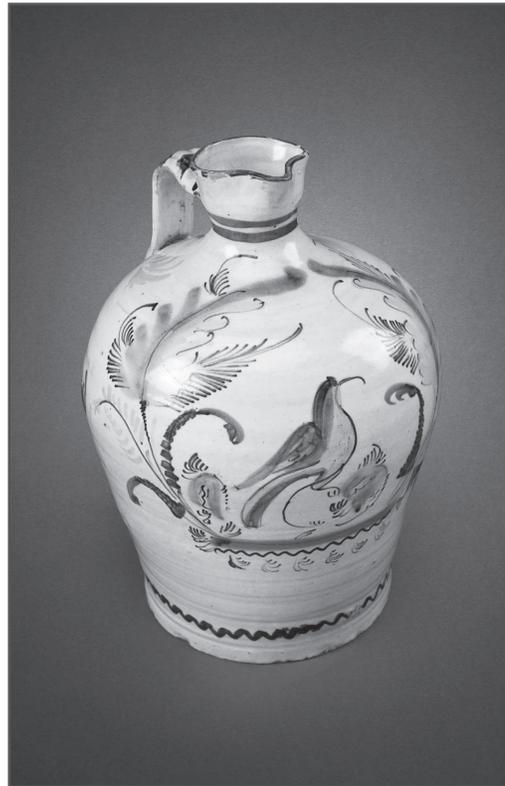
**CK: Tell us a little about the installation design of New World Cuisine:**

NC: For one thing, we tried to connect seemingly different sections to illustrate points, such as aspects of daily life. There are santos next to the Agriculture section for a reason. In the drawings, c.1800–1815, San Isidro is dressed in contemporary dress, showing what people

were actually wearing then, not Roman garb. Next to the santos is a wooden plow like the one in the drawing.

**CK: Putting this show together must have been challenging.**

NC: The show was joy for me. I love food history—and chocolate of course.



*Wine Jug, Puente del Arzobispo, Spain, ca. 1850–1900, ceramic, glaze, 11 5/8 in. × 8 7/16 in. Courtesy Museum of International Folk Art, Gift of Florence Dibell Bartlett (A.1955.87.78). Photo by Blair Clark.*

**NOTE**

1 Cordelia Thomas Snow, "Care Packages: Luxury Foods transported over El Camino Real, *El Palacio*, 117, no. 4 (Winter 2012): 44–51.

*This interview took place in Santa Fe on May 31, 2013.*



*churro sheep*

*Drawing by Louann Jordan*

**NICOLASA CHÁVEZ**, Curator of Spanish Colonial & Contemporary Hispano/Latino Collections, received two BAs in History and Spanish Language as well as her MA in History/Iberian Studies from the University of New Mexico. Prior to joining MOIFA's curatorial staff, Nicolasa was Curator/Site Manager of Casa San Ysidro: The Gutiérrez/Minge House of the Albuquerque Museum.

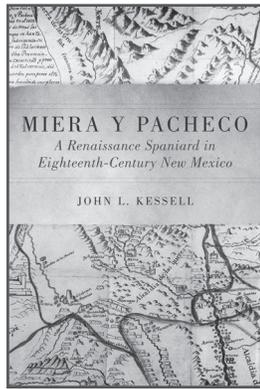
**CATHERINE LÓPEZ KURLAND** is Executive Editor of *Chronicles of the Trail*, a member of CARTA's Board of Directors, and co-author of *Hotel Mariachi: Urban Space and Cultural Landscape in Los Angeles* (University of New Mexico Press, October 2013).



*New World Kitchen, Courtesy Museum of International Folk Art. Photo by Blair Clark.*

## BOOK REVIEW

By Julianne Burton-Carvajal



*Miera y Pacheco: A Renaissance Spaniard in Eighteenth-Century New Mexico*, by John L. Kessell. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2013. 194 pages, illus.

### Prologue: Treasure Hunt

Monday in Santa Fe—June 2012. Early morning calm across the city. Only a whisper of traffic between our westerly hotel and our easterly destination. No one is visibly stirring as we navigate the network of residential streets, ascending eventually to a vast, empty parking lot.

The driver keeps the engine running while the passenger tries the church door. Barred and bolted. Too bad. Maybe someday, on another visit to Santa Fe . . . Time to hit the highway.

Departing the parking lot alongside the length of the nave, we notice a man exiting from a side door. The timing seems fortuitous. There's not another soul in sight. Shall we ask him?

"The office entrance is open, *señoras*. Pueden entrar."

Two art-loving history hounds, one born and raised in New Mexico, share an ecstatic hour alone with the Castrense altar screen—witnessing, as if by pre-arrangement, the full solar-illumination display, start to finish, at summer solstice.

Amazement. Close scrutiny. Here is the Sistine Chapel ceiling of colonial New Mexico, or its equivalent pietá. Veneration and growing wonderment. Who created it? When? Where? How?

We scan the handout once, twice, three times. "In the manner of certain carvings found in churches of Mexico as well as in southern Europe. . . . Exact source of the stone unknown. . . . Carved in 1760 by unknown artisans in the employ of Governor

Marín del Valle." That was the state of available knowledge in 1986, date of the pamphlet—exactly fifty years after John Gaw Meem, New Mexico's most renowned Pueblo-Spanish Revival architect, designed this grandly proportioned church in order to house a rediscovered 18<sup>th</sup>-century treasure.

Departing the neighborhood, spirits soaring, we impulsively stop the car to try another door—an office down the street and around the corner. Questioned about the altar screen, the young woman inside extends a copy of *El Palacio* magazine, Winter 2011, open to "New Mexico's Indo-Hispano Altar Screens" by Robin Farwell Gavin.

The title page pictures the altar screen from a midpoint in the pews, illuminated from top to bottom. Its caption credits Bernardo Miera y Pacheco. Until now, my friend and I have only known enough to admire him as an ingenious mapmaker.

"Could I possibly get a photocopy. . . ?"

"Go ahead and take the magazine. We have another."

That cloudless Santa Fe morning was raining gifts upon us.

### Forty Years in the Making

Thirteen months later, thanks to earlier-than-announced delivery from Amazon, all was revealed. It turns out that Miera y Pacheco shared some of Leonardo's talents as well as Michelangelo's. "A Renaissance Spaniard" is the defining phrase in the ten-word title of John Kessell's compact, handsomely packaged biography.

Chapter by chronological chapter, Kessell reweaves the scattered threads and fragments of a life that bridged the old world and the new, military and civil service, farming and building design, exploration and cartography, the creation of effigies in wood and stone evoking saints and martyrs—not to mention attaining de facto cabinet status with certain rulers of the land. Despite his allotted portion of setbacks, personal tragedies, and an occasional humiliation, de Miera y Pacheco was an I'll-try-anything immigrant who remained active through his seventh decade, enjoying the local prestige earned by his two grown sons as well as

the host of grandchildren who would multiply the family surname.

Kessell gives a passing nod to the thousands of Mieras who reside in 21<sup>st</sup>-century New Mexico. The life story of the founder of their line begins in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century—1713 to be exact. Publication of this biography coincides with the tricentennial of Miera's birth, and also California mission founder Junipero Serra's. More patience has been required of Miera y Pacheco, but two and a half centuries of waiting have finally paid off. It is impossible to imagine a more apt or more seasoned first biographer than John Kessell, who originally conceived the project in 1971, with the nation's approaching bicentennial in mind.

Historians venture into biographers' territory when widely scattered documents and period references begin to coalesce into intelligible patterns with interconnecting filaments. The life story of Bernardo Miera y Pacheco is linked to those of Juan Bautista Anza, father and son, and to other notable governors of New Mexico including Tomás Vélez Cachupín, who logged the longest tenure of all. It is also linked to the extended inspection tours of Bishop Pedro Tamarón y Romeral of Durango and Fray Francisco Antanasio Domínguez, to the intrepid search for a land route between the already venerable inland capital of Nuevo Mexico and the fledgling maritime capital of Nueva California at Monterey, to a durable peace with the rampaging Comanches, and to the emerging, now emblematic, New Mexican variants of Spanish colonial art forms like *bultos* and *retablos*.

Although he claims to favor "baroque" constructions, Kessell has a countervailing gift for distilling plain-English gems that speak volumes: "trading-and-raiding subsistence economies," for example, or Juan Bautista Anza II as an "heroic anomaly" and "organization man" whose commitment to implementing progressive Enlightenment reforms upon the "messy" situation he encountered in New Mexico "would elicit kudos from his supporters and curses from the New Mexicans." Why not set off on another stroll through well-known chapters of frontier history with a guide who is so adept at cutting through the underbrush and revealing familiar vistas from unfamiliar angles?

Fittingly and predictably, the richest rewards of the journey come towards the end. Chapters 6

and 7, "A Vision Quest with the Friars" and "Anza in Command," include gripping summaries of an impossible pilgrimage and a tragic/heroic massacre that resulted in a mutually respectful interlude of peace between two warring cultures. The concluding chapter, "To Die in Your Royal Service," brings the life of the man who accumulated "an unrivaled knowledge of the physical and human geography of New Mexico" to a quick, poignant close. But not without a good-faith nod to the wives and mothers and daughters who can be evoked by their lovely, sonorous names—Estefanía de los Dolores Domínguez de Mendoza de Miera y Pacheco, or Ana María Pérez Serrano de Anza—but not effectively rescued from the oblivion dictated by centuries of male precedence.

John Kessell has distilled four decades of research and reflection into 164 pages, with a dozen more pages of footnotes and seven of sources. Thanks to supplemental funding, eight full-color maps and nine examples drawn from Miera's range of devotional artwork complement the dozens of black-and-white map details strategically positioned throughout the text.

As Kessell notes, we can look forward to related volumes on the heels of this one: Felipe R. Mirabal's illustrated history of Miera's artwork, an anthology on the same topic edited by Josef B. Díaz of the New Mexico History Museum, and Carlos Herrera's in-depth study of Anza's efforts to implement Bourbon reforms during his decade-long tenure as Governor of New Mexico—an effort that benefited from the advice and support of Bernardo Pascual Joaquín de Miera y Pacheco, a distant cousin who also grew to manhood in the same northern Sonora *patria chica*.

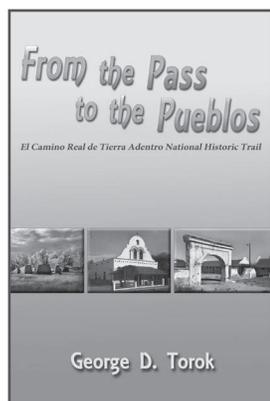
New Mexico has orchestrated major celebrations of late, foremost among them the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the nation's oldest capital in 2009-2010, and the centennial of statehood just last year. John Kessell deserves a celebration of his own for nigh-on fifty extraordinarily productive years of scholarly dedication, and for bringing Bernardo Miera y Pacheco so engagingly back to life in time for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth.

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**JULIANNE BURTON-CARVAJAL** is a freelance researcher, editor, and exhibitions curator who aspires to keep making annual visits to New Mexico from her home base in Monterey, California.

## BOOK REVIEW

By Joseph P. Sánchez



*From the Pass to the Pueblos: El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail*, by George D. Torok. Sunstone Press, Santa Fe, NM, 2012. Paperback; 372 pages, illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index.

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George D. Torok, PhD, CARTA's first president, has contributed a well-written study of *El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*, the Royal Road of the Interior. Torok's book is about the more than 400 miles of the trail within the United States. This work adds to the growing historiography of the 1,600-mile-long Camino Real, which spans two countries from Mexico City to Santa Fe and operated as a royal road from the 1540s to about 1821, when Mexico won its independence from Spain. The Camino Real's history within the United States continued during both the Mexican Territorial (1821–1848) and American Territorial (1848–1912) periods.

The Camino Real continued to add to its heritage into the twenty-first century when, in 2000, the U.S. Congress designated El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail. In 2010, UNESCO designated the portion of the trail within Mexico as a World Heritage Site. Torok's book focuses on the trail beginning at the U.S.-Mexico border, near San Elizario, Texas. Historically the trail terminated at San Juan de los Caballeros, New Mexico's first capital in 1598; followed by San Gabriel, the second capital in 1599; and finally at Santa Fe, established in 1610.

Drawing on printed sources, both primary and secondary, Torok weaves the story of a braided trail that evolved from a *carreta*, or wagon, road into the present-day corridor that runs south to north

along I-25 and along the railroad lines that cross from Texas into New Mexico. Torok's book is more than just a retelling of a thrice-told tale: his analysis blends old and new perspectives as he examines not merely the broad history of the Camino Real, but also the geography and local histories of particular stops and people along the route.

This book adds much insight regarding the values of the people of each period discussed, covering events that took place along and off the trail. The pageantry of travelers on the trail—Hispanic settlers, miners, traders, and friars; the Texas prisoners who attempted to invade New Mexico in 1841; the U.S. invading forces during the War with Mexico; and the Civil War Confederate and Union soldiers—reveals the importance of the Camino Real as a gateway to changing historical forces within our national story.

Torok shows how the Camino Real evolved from an Indian foot trail to a horse-and-wagon trail, and from a two-track road to a paved automobile corridor. The Camino Real was not only a transmitter of Western civilization, but also an immigration and trade route. Language, religion, technology, lore, foodstuffs, and ideas, among other things, came up the Camino Real in preparation for a modern world that can only marvel at the rich Native American, Hispanic, and Anglo traditions and heritage that grew from it. This book is recommended for students, travelers, and the general public interested in knowing more about the Camino Real as a part of our national story.

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**JOSEPH P. SÁNCHEZ**, PhD, is Superintendent of Petroglyph National Monument, National Park Service, and Director of the Spanish Colonial Research Center at the University of New Mexico. Sánchez is also founder and editor of the *Colonial Latin American Historical Review (CLAHR)*, and author of numerous books on the Spanish Southwest, including *New Mexico: A History* with co-authors Robert L. Spude and Art Gomez (University of Oklahoma Press, Fall 2013).

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Members:

Earlier this year I received a letter from a resident of Albuquerque, New Mexico, who sought information about the extant segments of the actual Camino Real from Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo south to El Paso, Texas, as he was planning a retracement ride on his bicycle. In my letter to him, I mentioned the disappointing



impact on the old trail due to the demands of modernity and its prioritization of the automobile. Whole segments of the former Royal Road, I wrote, had been turned under, covered up, or simply eradicated and replaced by asphalt highways and streets, residential areas, and shopping malls. The historic reality of the Camino Real, like the American cowboy, remains intact in our collective memory—but it's harder to see from the highway.

The gentleman's letter reminded me that the Camino Real holds all sorts of different meanings to different people. Whereas he perceives the trace of the former Royal Road as a path to cross in order to discover a sense of place and time, others ascribe meaning to the route particular to their own perspectives. Some see the Camino Real as the origin of their family's association with New Mexico, while others celebrate the fact that the trail is but one of many routes throughout America that have shaped our nation's history. For others, the story of the Camino Real is the story of New Mexico.

Later this summer in El Paso, stories about the Camino Real in Far West Texas and New Mexico, as well as other Royal Roads in the Western Hemisphere, will be shared during an international symposium. From Thursday to Sunday, September 26–29, 2013, CARTA is sponsoring "Los Caminos Reales de América," to broaden the understanding of Spain's colonization efforts in North, Central, and South America with the establishment of roads sanctioned by the Crown. More than twenty scholars, several of whom reside and teach abroad, will speak on a wide range of topics relating to Spain's Royal Road network in its New World Empire. Specific details about the conference can be found on the CARTA webpage ([www.caminorealcarta.org](http://www.caminorealcarta.org)), as well as through email alerts to CARTA members.

You are encouraged to attend the conference to learn about the interconnection among Royal Roads throughout the Americas. The speakers' sessions will be held on the campus of the University of Texas at El Paso at one of the university's conference facilities, and at the Hilton Garden Inn University Hotel. On Thursday afternoon there will be a curatorial tour of the El Paso Museum of History, and on Sunday there will be an optional bus tour of Camino Real-associated sites in and around El Paso.

If you wish to walk in the footpaths of the past, you will have the opportunity to do so this fall. On September 14 CARTA is sponsoring a hike up La Bajada south of Santa Fe, and on November 16 there will be another hike, on Tonuco Mountain in Doña Ana County.

On Saturday, October 26, CARTA will hold its Annual General Meeting near Socorro, at the El Camino Real Historic Trail Site (formerly the El Camino Real International Heritage Center). The Annual Meeting will take place in conjunction with the Board of Directors' quarterly meeting. Both meetings are open to CARTA members.

See you in El Paso!

Yours in preservation,

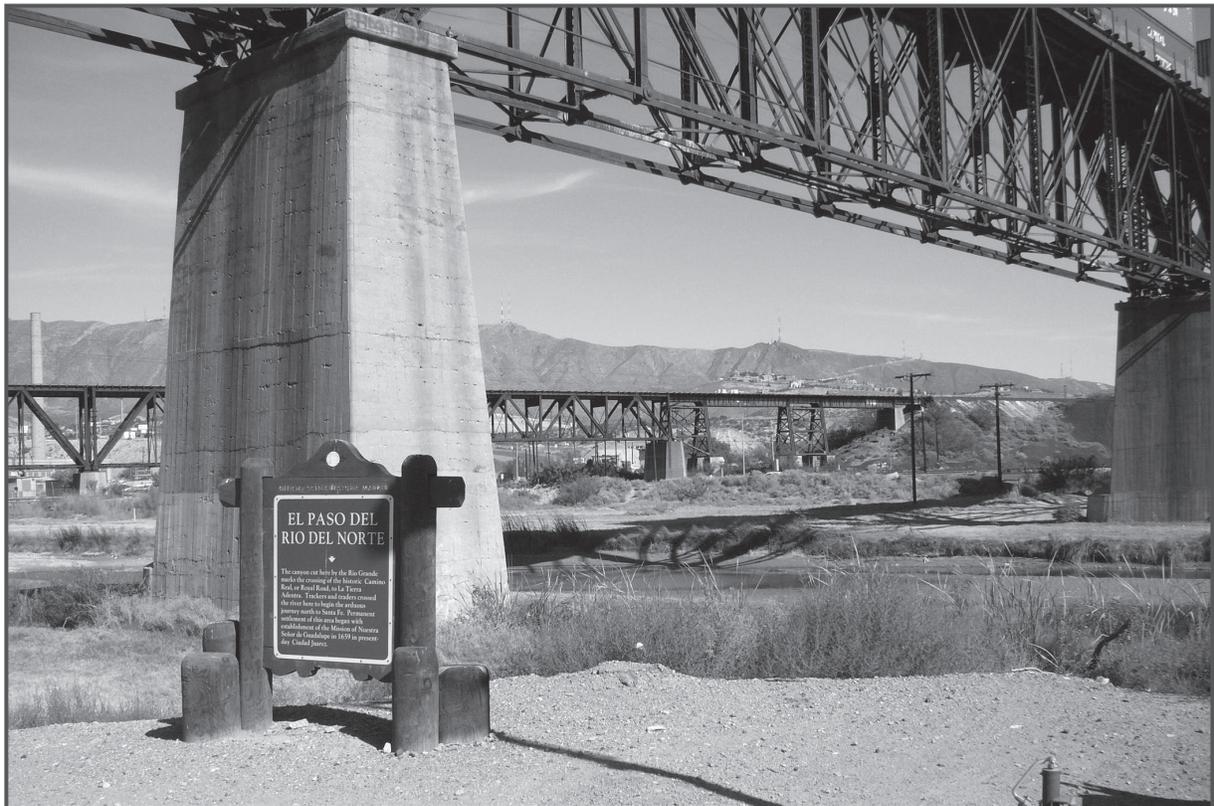
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Troy M. Ainsworth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.



*El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro  
Trail Association (CARTA)*

*PO Box 1434*

*Los Lunas, NM 87031-1434*



*“El Paso del Rio del Norte” near Sunland Park, Doña Ana County, New Mexico, 2010*