When Lieutenant Pike was sent to explore the Arkansas and Red Rivers, he may have received secret instructions to penetrate New Spain and assess conditions there. His invaluable companion, Dr. John Robinson, may almost certainly have been working for Louisiana filibusterer, schemer, and entrepreneur, James Wilkinson. At any rate, Pike built a stockade on the Rio Grande, and Robinson left for Santa Fe, with a half-plausible story about trying to recover the goods with which emigrant Baptiste Lelande had absconded. Shortly thereafter, the New Mexican government sent soldiers to escort Pike down to Santa Fe. The Spanish could no more penetrate the real reason for Pike and Robinson’s trespass than modern historians can, and sent him down to Chihuahua for further interviews with the Commander of the Provincias Internas, Nemesio de Salcedo.

While Robinson took advantage of his time in Chihuahua to try to defect, Pike spent most of his trip as a guest/prisoner pumping his genial captor, Lt. Malgares, for information and trying to find maps to copy. His notes and maps were confiscated, but he managed to recover or reconstruct them enough to publish this map, the first that many Americans had seen of the settlements in New Mexico.

Images:
2: Pikes stockade

1807

Pike and his troops were wintering in a stockade near the Rio Grande, possibly near present day La Jara, when they met with Spanish troops, who insisted Pike travel with them down to Santa Fe to answer charges of trespassing. In his defense, Pike claimed he believed the river to be the Red River.

Quote: The stockade was situated in a small prairie, on the west fork of the Rio del Norte. The south flank joining the edge of the river, (which at that place was not fordable,) the east and west curtains were flanked by bastions in the N. E. and N. W. angles, which likewise flanked the curtain of the north side of the work. The stockade from the centre of the angles of the bastions was thirty six feet square. There were heavy cottonwood logs about two feet diameter, laid up all round about six feet, after which lighter ones until we made it twelve feet in height; these logs were joined together by a lap of about two feet at each end. We then dug a small ditch on the inside all round, making it perpendicular on the internal side, and sloping next the work: in this ditch we planted small stakes of about six inches diameter, sharpened at the upper end to a nice point, slanted them over the top of the work, giving them about two and a half feet projection. We then secured them below and above in that position, which formed a small pointed frieze, which must have been removed before the works could have been scaled. Lastly, we had dug a ditch round the whole four feet wide, and let the water into it; the earth taken out being thrown against the work, formed an excellent rampart against small arms, three or four feet high. Our mode of getting in was to crawl over the ditch on a plank, and into a small hole sunk below the level of the work near the river for that purpose. Our port-holes we pierced about eight feet from the ground, and a platform prepared to shoot from. [Department of Special Collections, University of Chicago Library]

3: 1st camp

1807

Quote: (27 February 1807) In the morning I discovered that the lieutenant was writing letters, addressed to the Governor and others, on which I demanded if he was not going on with me to Santa Fé. He appeared confused, and said no; that his orders were so positive as to the safe conduct and protection of my men, that he durst not go and leave any behind; that his companion would accompany me to Santa Fe, with fifty men, whilst he, with the others, would wait for the sergeant and the remainder of my party. I replied that he had deceived me, and had not acted with candour: but it was now too late for me to remedy the evil.

We marched about eleven o'clock, ascending the Rio del Norte five miles more, south, 60º west, when we went round through a chain of hills, and bore off to the south. We proceeded nine miles further, when we crossed the main branch of that stream, which was now bearing nearly west, towards the main chain of the third chain of mountains. We encamped on the opposite shore, after having proceeded fifteen miles. The weather was intensely cold, and we were obliged to stop frequently to make fires. Snow deep. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

4: 2nd camp

1807

Quote: (28 February 1807) This day we saw a herd of wild horses; the Spaniards pursued them, and caught two colts, one of which the Indians killed and ate, the other was liberated. We continued our journey over
some hills, where the snow was very deep, and encamped at last on the top of a pretty high hill, among some pines. Distance advanced, thirty-six miles. We left the river, which in general ran about six, eight, and ten miles to the left or eastward of us. Saw great sign of elk. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

5: Ietan

1807

The Ietan are the only tribe besides the Pueblos that Pike met in person. In other sections of his narrative, he also comments on the slave trade conducted between the Ietan and the Spanish.

Quote: The Ietans, or Comanches, as the Spaniards term them, or Padoucas as they are called by the Pawnees, are a powerful nation which are entirely erratic, without the least species of cultivation, subsisting solely by the chase. Their wanderings are confined to the frontiers of New Mexico on the west, the nations on the Lower Red river on the south, the Pawnees and Osage on the east, and the Utahs, Kyaways and various unknown nations on the north. This nation, although entirely in our territories, is claimed exclusively by the Spaniards, and may be said to be decidedly in their interest, notwithstanding the few who lately paid a visit to Natchitoches. They are the only nation who border on the Spanish settlements, which that government treats as an independent people. They are by the Spaniards reputed brave; indeed they have given them some very strong evidences of this.

When I first entered the province of New Mexico, I was shewn various deserted villages and towns beaten down, which had been destroyed by the Ietans in an invasion of that province, when they were at war with the Spaniards about ten years since. From the village of Agua Caliente they carried off at one time two hundred head of horses, but they are now on an excellent understanding with the Spaniards, which Don Faciendo Malgares's late expedition has served very much to strengthen. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

Overview: Comanche

The Comanche were important in New Mexico's history, although their range extended far past today's state borders. Trade with the buffalo-rich Comanche was critical to the New Mexican colonies, and so they tolerated the raiding, although several settlements on the eastern fringe of the state ended up depopulated because of the pressure of Comanche raiding.

In 1787, Governor de Anza secured some decades of peace with the Comanche after his defeat of Comanche chief Cuerno Verde. That cleared the way for the Arapaho and the Cheyenne to move onto the plains and trade peacefully with the Spanish comancheros and ciboleros riding out of Santa Fe and Taos.

One of the southern tribes of the Shoshonean stock, and the only one of that group living entirely on the plains. Their language and traditions show that they are a comparatively recent offshoot from the Shoshoni of Wyoming, both tribes speaking practically the same dialect and, until very recently, keeping up constant and friendly communication. Within the traditionary period the 2 tribes lived adjacent to each other in southern Wyoming, since which time the Shoshoni have been beaten back into the mountains by the Sioux and other prairie tribes, while the Comanche have been driven steadily southward by the same pressure....

The Kiowa say that when they themselves moved southward from the Black-hills region, the Arkansas was the northern boundary of the Comanche.

In 1719 the Comanche are mentioned under their Siouan name of Padouca as living in what now is western Kansas.... At that time, they roamed all over the country about the heads of the Arkansas, Red, Trinity, and Brazos rivers, in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. For nearly 2 centuries they were at war with the Spaniards of Mexico and extended their raids far down into Durango. They were friendly to the Americans generally, but became bitter enemies of the Texans, by whom they were dispossessed of their best hunting grounds, and carried on a relentless war against them for nearly 40 years.

...By the treaty of Medicine Lodge in 1867 [they] agreed to go on their assigned reservation between Washita and Red rivers, southwest Oklahoma; but it was not until after the last outbreak of the southern prairie tribes in 1874-75 that they and their allies, the Kiowa and Apache, finally settled on it....

The Comanche were nomad buffalo hunters, constantly on the move, cultivating little form the ground, and living in skin tipis. They were long noted as the finest horsemen of the plains and bore a reputation for dash and courage. [Hodge, Frederick Webb]

05 March 1968:

Quote: (Aunt Sarah is going to tell us the story that her father told her about killing his first buffalo. He was about 15 or 16 when this happened in eastern part of Texas Panhandle). He said, when they were going on buffalo hunt they chose four of them to go along, same age. So they said, "You watch very close." Now you just stand there and watch. We going run." And says, "Then you see how this first one done." So this man went running over there and he missed his buffalo. And he told those boys to come along.
They rushed over there and my father - he said he had selected one that was - looked like was nice big one - so he rushed up there and after while he got his arrows out and make a good aim that he was taught to hit the buffalo right on the lower part of the ribs. And he shot and his arrow went through and he said the buffalo topple over and fell on this arrow and broke it. So he was talking about his arrow and the man that was teaching them told him, "Never mind about your arrow. You killed the buffalo. That's the first buffalo you kill."

So, when there was, course somebody to get the buffalo skin and bring it home. So he came home. And when he got home why all the Indians would see a person bring something - a deer or buffalo, what not, then they would all go over there and get a piece of that meat. So, when they got it why, somebody came along and says, "you got your first buffalo." And he said they had their drum. They were all ready to dance because it was his first buffalo. And they had a big dance about him killing a buffalo - his first one to kill.

So that was his lesson. You cannot say that only white people teach you something. The Indians teach them what to do - how be a warrior, how to kill a buffalo, how to be a horseman, and how to do this and that, everything. So they have gone to school that way. There was always one man to teach them what they could do.

And the same way with girls....The girls were taught to cook and they were taught to sew something and they were trained to tan hides and put up teepees and pack on the travois, to sew shoes - moccasins they called them - and learn lot of things that a woman could do. and the could go to the creek and bring their wood on their back - lotta things that we learned to do was just like going to school. So we are just as human as anybody that could be taught. So, anyway, that's all the things the Indians do is what they learn from old people. We are a race of people that as God made us and we are here to live the way we like to live on the prairie. But the white man got us and put us in houses and we learned to do what ever they tell us to do. Lotta things like sewing and cookin' and learning how to write. And my wishes are that all my children learn the white way because they are going to live with the white people. But the old Indian ways are gone. I am an old lady and I will live my life the way I want it because I am almost through with this world.

--Sarah Pohocscucut, age 72. Comanche from Lawton, OK. Bob Miller, interviewer. [Oklahoma Western History Collection]

Images:

Group of Comanche, including children

Comanche Lodges

Links:
Comanche Nation website -- http://comanchenation.com

6: San Juan

1807

Quote: (02 March 1807) We marched late, and passed several little mud-walled villages and settlements, all of which had round mud towers, of the ancient shape and construction, to defend the inhabitants from the intrusions of the savages. I was this day shewn the ruins of several old villages, which had been taken and destroyed by the letans.

We were frequently stopped on our march by the women, who invited us into their houses to eat, and in every place where we halted a moment, there was a contest who should be our hosts. My poor lads who had been frozen were conducted home by old men, who would cause their daughters to dress their feet, provide their victuals and drink, and at night give them the best bed in the house. The whole of their conduct brought to my recollection the hospitality of the ancient patriarchs, and caused me to sigh with regret at the corruption of that noble principle by the polish of modern ages.
We descended the creek of Agua Caliente about twelve miles, to where it joined the river of Conejos from the west. This river was about thirty yards wide, and was settled for twelve miles above its junction with the Agua Caliente, as the latter was for its whole course from the village of that name. From their junction, the distance was about five miles to the Rio del Norte, on the eastern branch of which was situated the village of St. John’s, which was the residence of the president priest of the province, who had dwelt there forty years.

The tops of the houses, as well as the streets, were crowded when we entered; and at the door of the public quarters we were met by the priest. My companion, who commanded the escort, received him in a street and embraced him, and all the poor creatures who stood round strove to kiss the ring or hand of the holy Father; for myself, I saluted him in the usual style. My men were conducted into the quarters, and I went to the house of the priest, where we were treated by him with politeness: he offered us coffee, chocolate, and whatever we thought proper, and desired me to make myself at home....

St. John was enclosed with a mud wall, and probably contained one thousand souls; its population consisted principally of civilized Indians, and indeed all the villages of North Mexico are the same, the whites not forming the one twentieth part. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

**Overview:** Ohkay Owingue Pueblo

Named San Juan de los Caballeros by the Spanish, Ohkay Owingue is a Tewa-speaking pueblo just north of the confluence of the Rio Chama and the Rio Grande. Residents of this pueblo participated in both the Revolt of 1680 and the Revolt of 1837.

**01 June 1969:**

*Quote:* We don't have any stories about the Spanish coming here and I mean, I think the Indians have always been afraid to tell the stories about the coming of the Spanish because just as I repeat, we have been Christianized... you know and the church ways, well we were always right and you were always wrong... and we were made to believe that, you know. You were always wrong and we were always right and so we don't have stories about when the Spanish came and I have to learn these things through history. But some of use who have analyzed and studied the history, especially a good friend of mine, he has done a lot of studying....

When the Spanish came here... we the people of San Juan and Oyenque supposedly moved to the other side of the river and they gave the old portion of the pueblo to the Spanish... so the Spanish called us San Juan de los Cabellitos.... and of course Alfonso doesn't believe that, he says no, and so he says when we heard that the Spanish were coming, they go tall the women and children together and they sent them away somewhere... you know, in hiding... Someplace, he knows where, he said that they sent all the children and women together, and when they sent them away from San Juan when they heard that the Spanish were coming and they had always heard of the cruelty of the Spanish you know, when the Spanish came up from the south and encountered the pueblos lower in the south, they had been very cruel.... and so when San Juan people heard that the Spanish were coming, they got the women and children together and sent them away so where, only the men stayed here and they were powerless against the Spanish guns, so maybe they did let the Spanish establish their capital across the river, and maybe we did move here but I mean it wasn't because of kindness, it was because we were scared.

--David Garcia, San Juan Pueblo. Interviewer, Mike Weber. [University of New Mexico, Department of History]

**Images:**

![The Governor of San Juan and His Family](image)

**Links:**

1807

Quote: Santa Fe is situated along the banks of a small creek, which comes down from the mountains, and runs west to the Rio del Norte. The length of the town on the creek may be estimated at one mile, and it is but three streets in width. Its appearance from a distance, struck my mind with the same effect as a fleet of flat bottomed boats, such as are seen in the spring and fall seasons' descending the Ohio river.

There are two churches, the magnificence of whose steeples forms a striking contrast to the miserable appearance of the other buildings. On the north side of the town is the square of soldiers' houses, one hundred and twenty, or one hundred and forty on each flank. The public square is in the centre of the town, on the north side of which is situated the palace, as they term it, or government house, with the quarters for guards, &c., the other is occupied by the clergy, and public officers.

In general, the houses have a shed before their front, some of which have a flooring of brick; this occasions the streets to be very narrow, being, in general, about twenty-five feet. The supposed population is four thousand five hundred souls. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

Quote: (04 March 1807) ...if he [Governor Alencaster] would be at the pains of reading my commission from the United States, and my orders from my General, it would be all that I presumed would be necessary to convince His Excellency that I came with no hostile intentions towards the Spanish government; that on the contrary I had express instructions to guard against giving them offence or alarm, and that His Excellency would be convinced, that myself and party were to be considered as objects on which the so much celebrated generosity of the Spanish nation might be exercised, rather than subjects to occasion opposite sentiments....

After examining the contents of my trunk, the Governor informed me I must with my troop go to Chihuahua in the Province of Biscay....

In the morning I had received from the Governor by the hands of his private secretary, twenty-one dollars, notifying to me that it was the amount of the King's allowance for my party to Chihuahua, and that it would be charged to me on account of my subsistence: from this I clearly understood that it was calculated the expenses of the party to Chihuahua were to be defrayed by the United States. I also received by the same hands, from His Excellency, a shirt and neckcloth, with his compliments, wishing me to accept them as they were made in Spain by his sister, and never had been worn by any person; for which I returned him my sincere acknowledgments. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

Overview: Santa Fé

Santa Fe was for centuries the end of the Camino Real, and has almost always been the seat of government in New Mexico. Most of the original town was built between 1610-1612, and centered around the plaza. The barrio of Analco, across the Río de Santa Fé from the plaza, was one of the main genízaro settlements of New Mexico from its founding at least until the late eighteenth century.

The Casas Reales, or the Palace of the Governors, was built in 1610 when Santa Fé was established. People took refuge in it during the Indian siege of August 1680. Subsequently, this seat of government was occupied by the Pueblo rebels, again by the Spanish, by the Mexican Provincial governors, by U.S. General Kearny, the Confederate Army, and a string of American Territorial governors. [Long Distance Trails Group--Santa Fe, National Park Service, New Mexico State Office, Bureau of Land Management]

Quote: Every calculation based on experience elsewhere fails in New Mexico...
--Lew Wallace, Governor of Territorial New Mexico, 1878-1881

Images:

House in Santa Fe  
San Miguel church, the oldest in America

Links:
8: Indiens de Nahjo

1807

Quote: The Nanahaws are situated to the north-west of Santa Fe, and are frequently at war with the Spaniards. They are supposed to be two thousand warriors strong, and are armed in the same manner as the two preceding nations [Utah and Iepans]. This nation, as well as all others to the west of them, bordering on California, speak the language of the Apaches and Lee Panis [Lipan Apache?], who are in a line with them to the Atlantic. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

Overview: Navajos

The earliest arrival of the Navajo into the Four Corners region may have been around the year 1000. Over time, the Navajo and their Puebloan neighbors developed a symbiotic relationship: The Navajo traded goods resulting from their hunting and gathering economy for agricultural goods from the more sedentary Puebloan peoples. This symbiotic relationship resulted in the sharing of cultural traits.

The Navajo today reside on a 16-million-acre reservation-- the largest Indian reservation in the United States. The reservation surrounds the present Hopi Indian Reservation. A tribal President and a tribal council govern the Navajo Reservation. The reservation is broken up into administrative districts called chapters. [Long Distance Trails Group--Santa Fe, National Park Service, New Mexico State Office, Bureau of Land Management]

1976:

Quote: We hear about the sacred mountain-- the San Francisco Peaks (Dook' o' oosthliid) -- being disrupted by the white people for some housing and developments. We, as Navajos, love our sacred mountains-- Blanca Peak (Sis Naajiní) is in the east, Mount Taylor (Tsoodzilth) is in the south, the San Francisco Peaks (Dook' o' oosthliid) are in the west and the La Plata Range (Dibé' Nitsaa) stands in the north. Then, we have Huerfano Mountain (Dzilth Na' odilthii) and the Gobernado Knob (Ch'óol'í'í); and we dwell within the big area bounded by those mountains. We do not want them harmed or destroyed. To us the mountains are sacred, and there are holy beings living in them. That is why we do not want them harmed. To become a part of these sacred mountains we have sacred mountain soil charms in our possession, which we cherish. They are our guidance and our protection. All we ask is that the white people leave our sacred mountains alone. [Johnson, Broderick, Editor]

1976:

Quote: My name is Ch'ahadiniini' Binali, I am 94 years old. The clan of my father was the Meadow People (Halstooí). He was Hopi; they just wandered into our tribe.

My grandfather on my mother's side, whose name was Mr. White, and a brother of his named Mr. Blind, along with their maternal granddaughter, came into our tribe. Not long after, other grandchildren were born. One of them was Mr. Slim, another was Little Yellowman. The youngest, who was my father, was born for the Meadow People clan; so I was born for it also. he was married into the Near the Water clan (To' ahani), and from that came the slim relationship of all relatives of the Hopi tribe who became Navajos. I have many relatives on my father's side at Fluted Rock. Anyhow, my real clan is the Towering House People (Kinyaa'áa nii), on my mother's side.

This clan came originally from White Shell (Changing) Woman. It was at the base of San Francisco Peaks that it came into being. Under that peak is where Changing Woman arrived from Gobernador Knob, a place which is in New Mexico. Before she came she had twin boys whom she brought along. She took them near San Francisco Peaks to some traditional hogans at that place. There they learned the Blessing Way chant.

Changing Woman then left toward the West where she was supposed to live with the Sun on an island in the middle of the ocean. When she arrived at San Francisco Peaks she had said to the twins, "My journey is come to an end, and I am going back to where I belong. My children, you have learned all of the Blessing Way chant from me." The two winds would be the air for the twins to help them go to her later. The process would mean the creation of their souls, and then they would become beings. [Johnson, Broderick, Editor]
9: Vitior

1807

It is not clear how Pike managed to mistake the name of La Cienega for Vitior, unless he picked it up from the name of nearby Vitior creek. This error persists for another four decades.

Overview: La Cienega

As the closest paraje, or camping ground, to Santa Fe, the springs at La Cienega refreshed travelers on the next-to-last stop on a long, weary journey.

La Ciénega was a seventeenth-century pueblo that was resettled by Spaniards in the early eighteenth century. It has been inhabited nearly continuously since before the arrival of the Spanish.

It was also called El Guicú, San José del Guicú, and La Cañada del Guicú in the eighteenth century.

Modern visitors to La Cienega can visit El Rancho de las Golondrinas, a Spanish Colonial Living HIstory Museum.

Links:
El Rancho de las Golondrinas -- http://www.golondrinas.org/
Vitior (La Cienega 1810) -- http://atlas.nmhum.org/atlas.php?gmap=11&glat=35.5757&glng=-106.1100&gzoom=8&g=496
El Rancho de Delgado (La Cienega 1846) -- http://atlas.nmhum.org/atlas.php?gmap=18&glat=34.5246&glng=-107.4243&gzoom=8&g=734
Sieneguilla (La Cienega 1867) -- http://atlas.nmhum.org/atlas.php?gmap=26&glat=35.5121&glng=-106.3806&gzoom=9&g=393

10: Albuquerque

1807

Quote: (07 March 1807) Marched at nine o'clock, through a country better cultivated and inhabited than any I had yet seen. Arrived at Albuquerque, a village on the eastern side of the Rio del Norte. We were received by Father Ambrosio Guerra in a very flattering manner, and led into his hall, from thence, after taking some refreshment, into an inner apartment, where he ordered his adopted children of the female sex to appear, when they came in by turns. They were Indians of various nations--Spanish, French, and finally two young girls who, from their complexion, I conceived to be English: on perceiving I noticed them, he ordered the rest to retire, many of whom were beautiful, and directed these two to sit down on the sofa beside me. Thus situated, he told me that they had been taken to the east by the letans, passed from one nation to the other until he purchased them, (at that time infants) but they could recollect neither names nor language.

...At Father Ambrosio's was the only chart I saw in the province; and it gave the near connection of the sources of the Rio del Norte, and the Rio Colorado of California, with their ramifications.

Both above and below Albuquerque the citizens were beginning to open the canals, to let in the water of the river to fertilize the plains and fields which border its banks on both sides: we saw men, women, and children of all ages and both sexes, at the joyful labour, which was to crown with rich abundance their future harvest, and ensure them plenty for the ensuing year. These scenes brought to my recollection the bright descriptions
given by Savary, of the opening of the canals of Egypt. The cultivation of the fields was now commencing, and everything appeared to give life and gaiety to the surrounding scenery. We crossed the Rio del Norte, a little below the village of Albuquerque, where it was four hundred yards wide, but not more than three feet deep, and excellent fording. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

Overview: Albuquerque

Albuquerque was founded as a villa in 1706 in a rich agricultural region of New Mexico. Its Old Town plaza was the original town center. Evidently, the decision to settle the "Bosque Grande of Doña Luisa" was made in 1698. A manuscript from February 1706 showed that Governor Cuervo y Valdéz authorized the actual settlement, which took place shortly thereafter. A church, dedicated to Saint Francis Xavier, was later rededicated to San Felipe, in honor of His Majesty the King.

The name was changed to Albuquerque after the United States militarily occupied New Mexico. [Long Distance Trails Group--Santa Fe, National Park Service, New Mexico State Office, Bureau of Land Management]

Images:

![Albuquerque in 1857, with a view of San Felipe de Neri Church, the plaza, and the Sandia Mountains in the background](image)

Links:

City of Albuquerque website -- [http://cabq.gov](http://cabq.gov)
Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau -- [http://itsatrip.org](http://itsatrip.org)

11: Met with northbound caravan

1807

Quote: (12 March 1807) Marched at seven o'clock, and passed on the western side of the river the mountains of Magdalen, and the Black Mountains on the east. Passed the encampment of the caravan, going out with about fifteen thousand sheep for the other provinces, for which they bring back merchandize.

This expedition consisted of about three hundred men, chiefly citizens, escorted by an officer and thirty-five or forty troops; they are collected at Sibilleta, and separate on their return; they go out in February and return in March. A similar expedition goes out in the autumn; during the other parts of the year no citizen travels the road. The couriers meet at the pass of the Rio del Norte and exchange packets, when each returns to his own province. Met a caravan of fifty men and probably two hundred horses, loaded with traffic for New Mexico.

Halted at twelve o'clock and marched at three. Lieutenant Malgares shewed me the place where he had been in two affrays with the Apaches, in one he commanded himself, and in the other was commanded by Captain D'Almansa; in the former there was one Spaniard killed and eight wounded, and ten Apaches made prisoners; in the latter fifty-two Apaches wounded, and seventeen killed, they being surprised in the night. Malgares killed two himself, and had two horses killed under him. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

Overview: Socorro

Socorro has been steeped in New Mexico history since Don Juan de Oñate stopped off during his entrada on June 14, 1598. The site was then occupied by Pilabo, the northernmost Piro Indian pueblo; the Oñate documents called it "Piloque." Oñate was in advance of the main body of colonists. The caravan, still struggling through the desert behind him, was in desperate need of provisions. Of the Piro Indians, Oñate said, they "gave us much corn." The pueblo was renamed Socorro (succor, help) to commemorate the gift.
While Oñate continued north, two priests remained behind to do missionary work among the Indians. Fray Alfonso was so successful that he became known as "The Apostle of Socorro."

The two priests built a modest church, to be replaced by a larger structure between 1615 and 1626. Here Fray Zuñiga and Fray Antonio de Arteaga planted the first grapes to be raised in New Mexico.

In late 1681, after the Pueblo Revolt, Governor Don Antonio de Otermin returned to the north in a half-hearted attempt at reconquest. He reached Socorro in November and found the community abandoned and the church profaned. He burned what supplies and provisions were left to keep them from falling into the hands of rebel Indians. He was unsuccessful in negotiating peace. The Indians had "returned to idolatry" and were unwilling to accept the resumption of Spanish rule. On January 2, 1682, Otermin gave up his attempt to reassert Spanish rule and started back toward El Paso.

Ten years later, on August 21, 1692, Don Diego de Vargas set out from El Paso for the reconquest of New Mexico. His force consisted of sixty Spaniards and a hundred friendly Indians. Within four months de Vargas restored twenty-three pueblos to Spain's empire. By September, 1693, de Vargas was back in El Paso gathering an expedition for resettlement. He was not as lucky this time; his force met with resistance. The battle to occupy Santa Fe was short, but it took most of 1694 to subdue the remainder of the pueblos.

During the recolonization, the former residents of Socorro did not return. Except for travelers and caravans on the Camino Real, Socorro was deserted and dormant until 1816 when the Spanish Crown awarded land to twenty-one families by the Socorro Grant.

The settlers depended upon agriculture and raising cattle and sheep. They settled on the hillside and valley floor, irrigating their crops from mountain springs and the Río Grande. There were fields of wheat and corn, vineyards and orchards, and pastures. As protection from the Apaches, they built adobe houses facing a central courtyard.

During the second quarter of the nineteenth century, life in Socorro settled into a leisurely if not lazy agrarian pattern, punctuated by occasional Apache raids and the arrival of travelers on the old Camino Real, now usually called the Chihuahua Road by the Santa Fe traders.

Socorro was the last stop before or the first stop after crossing the Jornada del Muerto, and the residents learned to profit from their position.

The 1850s brought changes. Fort Craig was built some twenty miles to the south, and Socorro became an "army town," a trading center and rendezvous for officers and men from the fort. After the Civil War erupted, freighting and storing supplies created a bustle that completely transformed the village. [Long Distance Trails Group--Santa Fe, National Park Service, New Mexico State Office, Bureau of Land Management]

Images:

San Miguel Mission, Socorro

Links:

🤔 12: Grand Copper Mines

1807

Pike did not actually visit the mines himself, so he must have learned of these on his journey down the river.

Quote: There are no mines known in the province, except one of copper, situated in a mountain on the western side of the Rio del Norte in latitude 34° N. It is wrought, and produces twenty thousand mule loads of copper
annually, furnishing that article for the manufactories of nearly all the internal provinces. It contains gold, but not quite in sufficient quantity to pay for its extraction, consequently it has not been pursued. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

**Overview: Santa Rita del Cobre Mines**

This mineral-rich area was known to native inhabitants long before Europeans "discovered" it. In precontact times, it was a source for low-grade turquoise, and later, the Warm Springs Apache collected copper from the surface.

The Spanish began mining in earnest in 1799, after being given a sample of the pure, malleable copper by friendly Apaches. Within a few years, they had established a presidio and were working the mines with convict labor. Work on the mines continued through Mexican independence, and most of Mexico's copper money from those years was made of the Santa Rita copper, packed out on burros to Mexico City.

After the Americans claimed New Mexico, activity ended for some decades, due to Apache hostilities. The mine was sold to American investors in the 1870s, and today is operated by Phelps Dodge.

The Santa Rita Observation Point is located on the east side of NM Highway 152 just south of milepost 6.

**Links:**

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**13: Passo del Norte**

1807

*Quote:* Marched in the morning and arrived at the Passo del Norte at eleven o'clock, the road leading through a hilly and mountainous country. We put up at the house of Don Francisco Garcia, who was a merchant and a planter; he possessed in the vicinity of the town twenty thousand sheep, and one thousand cows.

We were received in a most hospitable manner by Don Pedro Roderique Rey, the lieutenant governor, and Father Joseph Prado, the vicar of the place. This was by far the most flourishing town we had been in. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

**Overview: El Paso**

Although the Spanish did not settle the area until the Pueblo Revolt, Oñate noted it as he crossed the Rio Grande, and it gained significance on maps as an important landmark, where the river continues to be crossed to this day.

After fleeing the warring Puebloans, the Spanish built a settlement on the banks of the Rio Grande and waited eleven years for reinforcements. About two years in, Governor Otermín tried to retake the Rio Arriba to no avail.

During this period, the priests planted vineyards, which bore fruit that made eventually made El Paso del Norte famed in the region for its fine wines and brandies.

The Piro of the Rio Abajo retreated with the Spanish and together they established three mission churches, active to this day: Mission Ysleta del Sud, Mission Soccoro, and San Elizario Mission.

*Quote:* In the name of the most Christian king, Don Philip.... I take and seize tenancy and possession, real and actual, civil and natural, one two, three times... and all the times that by right I can and should....without limitations

--*Juan de Oñate at El Paso, April 1598*

**Images:**
14: San Elizario

1807

*Quote:* Left the Passo at three o'clock for St. Eleazaro, accompanied by the Lieutenant-Governor, the vicar, and Allencaster, a brother of the Governor.

Malgares, myself, and the Doctor took up our quarters at the house of Captain --, who was then at Chihuahua; but his lady and sister entertained us in a very elegant and hospitable manner. They began playing cards, and continued until late the third day. Malgares, who won considerably, would send frequently fifteen or twenty dollars from the table to the lady of the house, her sisters, and others, and beg their acceptance of them, in order that fortune might still continue propitious; in this manner he distributed five hundred dollars.

Round this fort were a great number of Apaches, who were on a treaty with the Spaniards: these people appeared to be perfectly independent in their manners, and were the only savages I saw in the Spanish dominions whose spirit was not humbled, and whose neck was not bound to the yoke of their invaders.

With these people Malgares was extremely popular, and I believe he sought popularity with them, and with all the common people, for there was no man so poor or so humble under whose roof he would not enter; and when he walked out I have seen him put a handful of dollars in his pocket, and give them all before he returned to quarters, to the old men, women, and children; but to his equals he was haughty and overbearing. This conduct he pursued through the whole provinces of North Mexico and Biscay, when at a distance from the seat of government. But I could plainly perceive he was cautious of his conduct as he approached the capital. [Pike, Zebulon Montgomery]

**Overview:** San Elizario

San Elizario was built first as a military presidio to protect the citizens of the river settlements from Apache attacks in 1789. The structure as it stands today has interior pillars, detailed in gilt, and an extraordinary painted tin ceiling.

The missions of El Paso have a tremendous history spanning three centuries. They are considered the longest, continuously occupied religious structures within the United States and as far as we know, the churches have never missed one day of services. [Long Distance Trails Group--Santa Fe, National Park Service, New Mexico State Office, Bureau of Land Management]

After a successful expedition to the headwaters of the Mississippi, Lt. Zebulon Pike was assigned by General James Wilkinson, governor of Louisiana to trace the Red River westward and, secretly, visit Spanish Santa Fe. Pike, with 22 men, Lt. James Wilkinson (the General's son) and Dr. John Robinson traveled to the headwaters of the Arkansas, exploring southern Colorado and the Rockies. Reduced in numbers due to illness, Pike, Robinson and six others crossed the mountains in winter, finally building a stockaded fort on the Rio Conejos, a tributary of the Rio Grande, where the party was arrested by the Spanish. Pike and his remaining party were taken first to Santa Fe and then to Chihuahua and then escorted across Texas to Natchitoches.

TIMELINE: SHIFTING ALLEGIANCES

1800

In 1800, Napoleon signed the secret Treaty of Ildefonso with Spain, stipulating that France should provide Spain with a kingdom if Spain would return Louisiana to France. Napoleon's plan for dominating North America collapsed when the revolt in the French colony of Saint-Domingue succeeded, forcing French troops to return defeated to France. As Napoleon's New World empire disintegrated, the loss of Haiti made Louisiana unnecessary.

Nov 1801

Philip Nolan, a surveyor who worked for Louisiana Trader James Wilkinson, and (who had established trade into Texas and had a wife & child in San Antonio de Bexos) left Louisiana to invade Texas with 30 countrymen, was killed en route by Spanish forces under Pedro de Nava. Nolan is sometimes credited with being the first to map Texas for the American frontiersmen, but his map has never been found. Nonetheless, his observations were passed on to General James Wilkinson, who used them to produce his map of the Texas-Louisiana frontier in 1804.

1803

On November 30, 1803, Spain's representatives officially transferred Louisiana to France. Although the French representative was instructed to transfer Louisiana to the United States the next day, twenty days actually separated the transfers, during which time Laussat became governor of Louisiana and created a new town council. During this time he is issued secret instructions in which France lays claim to the Rio Grande from the mouth (Rio de las Palmas on the Gulf) to the 30th parallel. "The line of demarcation stops after reaching this point... the farther we go northward, the more undecided is the boundary."

This becomes the basis for the Texian claim to eastern New Mexico.

On December 20, 1803, the French officially gave lower Louisiana to the United States. The United States took formal possession of the full territory of Louisiana, although its boundaries were vaguely defined, in St. Louis three months later, when France handed over the rights to upper Louisiana.
Jean Baptiste La Lande stole a wagon team and expatriated to New Mexico, becoming the first American to move there.

1805

Admiral Lord Nelson defeats the Spanish navy at Trafalgar, precipitating the end of Spanish military force.

James Pursley arrives in New Mexico trying to drum up trade with the Plains tribes, and stays in Santa Fe as a carpenter.

1806

Expedition headed by General Wilkinson and Lieutenant Zebulon Pike travels west with secret instructions to scout out the northern Spanish territories. Dr. John Robinson joins the expedition at the last minute, but becomes a valued member of the party.

1807

Robinson meets Don Nemesio Salcedo, Captain General of Internal Provinces.

Salcedo refuses his attempt to defect.

1812

Robinson meets with Secretary of State James Monroe, who is concerned that filibustering activity might provoke war with Spain; appoints Robinson to the post of envoy to Nemesio Salcedo.

Robinson goes from Natchitoches through Texas, meeting Bernardo Gutierrez de Lara and Augustus Magee. He also meets with Salcedo, who suspects him once again of spying, and refuses to enter negotiations.

1813

Robinson publishes inflammatory epistles in favor of Mexican revolution (see Liberty Showering Her Blessings), is dismissed by the State department.

Texas declares independence in April.

Royal forces reclaim it in September.

King Joseph Bonaparte (Napoleon's brother) flees Wellington, Ferdinand VII returns to the throne.

1814

Robinson disputes with Toledo about leadership of the revolutionary force.

Moves to New Orleans, offers support to Governor Claiborne, is refused, takes a post in the militia, in a hospital near New Orleans.

1815

Robinson sails for Veracruz to help the revolution. He writes for support to President Madison, including a copy of the new Mexican constitution, and remains with the Republican Army for 18 months (through the end of 1816).

1816

Robinson retires from his commission as Brigadier General in the Mexican Revolutionary Army.

1817

Robinson condemned by Spanish envoy Onís, engages in verbal battle in papers, settles in Natchez.

1819

John Quincy Adams, President Monroe's Secretary of State, negotiates a treaty with Luis de Onís to define the boundary of Texas (the Adams-Onís Treaty Line). Under the Florida Treaty, Spain cedes Florida and Texas west to Sabine River.

1821

Texas becomes a province of Mexico following the revolution.

Mexico combines Texas & Coahuila, opens immigration to large numbers of Americans into Texas.

William Becknell takes wagons across what will become the Santa Fe Trail.

1822

Regular route established along Santa Fe Trail "led directly to the San Miguel by way of the Cimarron River instead of following the Arkansas to the mountains direct to San Miguel instead of by way of Taos."
Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri petitions the Senate, to make the Santa Fe Trail a permanent road "to draw from the bosom of the wilderness an immense wealth which now must be left to grow and perish where it grows or be gathered by the citizens of some other government to the great loss of Missouri." Commissioners mark out a road from Missouri to the Mexican boundary. Sibley surveys a new, longer road.

1824

Mexican constitution establishes Texas and Coahuila as sister states, as with New Mexico and Chihuahua.

1835-1836

Texans revolt against Mexico, and fight for independence, claiming all land to the Rio Grande.

Texans rebels capture General Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto, and win a surrender with the Treaty of Velasco, which stipulates that the "limits of Texas would not extend past the Rio Grande." However, Mexico never ratifies this treaty.

1837

United States grants formal recognition to the Republic of Texas.

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New Mexicans overthrow centralist governor Albino Perez, Manuel Armijo rises to power in 1838.

The government offers large land grants to both native citizens and to American merchants such as St. Vrain, Maxwell, and Mirabeau.

1841

Texas expedition led by Brigadier General Hugh McLeod, and accompanied by journalist George Wilkins Kendall, travels across the Llano Estacado to ask New Mexicans to join Texas in independence or to open trade. Governor Armijo has the Texans captured, brutally mistreated, and forced to march in chains to Mexico City, where they remained imprisoned for several years.

1843

Texas sends two raiding parties to New Mexico in retribution for the mistreatment of the Texas-Santa Fe Expedition.

Taos gets closed as a port of entry.

1844

Question of Texas central to United States presidential election, and popular support of annexation sweeps James K. Polk into office.

1845

Annexation of Texas; formally admitted as a state December 29, 1845.

State constitution supports Texas' claims to all lands extending to the Rio Grande.

1846

Polk declares war with Mexico, and General Zachary Taylor invades Mexico along the Rio Grande in Texas.

United States forces led by General Stephen Kearny seize New Mexico, and Governor Armijo is persuaded to surrender without a battle.

Colonel Alexander Doniphan writes the code for governing the Territory of New Mexico.

New Mexico is designated the Ninth Military Department of the United States.

1847

Rebels in Taos lead an uprising against the American government, and kill Governor Charles Bent.

1848

Mexico signs the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which cedes lands in California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico to the United States. The boundary of New Mexico is described in relation to Disturnell's map, which showed erroneous distances.

1848 Fort Bliss established.

1849

The Department of Interior established. Interior would manage most of the lands in New Mexico for some time to come.
The Texas boundary compromise required Texas to release claims to lands in eastern New Mexico, in exchange for a settlement of debts. As part of the Compromise of 1850, New Mexico was finally admitted as a territory, with the issue of slavery to be decided by New Mexicans.

1851-1853
Fort Bliss abandoned for Fort Fillmore

1852-1860
Cantonment Burgwin established to control Taos rebels. The fort was decommissioned in 1860 and the soldiers moved to Fort Garland or Fort Union.

1852 Boundary Survey
1st international boundary commission established in accordance with the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo.
This survey runs into difficulties establishing the boundary line, and the Americans realize that the line as surveyed does not give them a transcontinental railway route.

1853
Gadsden Purchase from Mexico expands New Mexico territory.

1854
Fort Bliss moved to Magoffinsville.

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