

# A CRÓNICA

ISSUE NUMBER 32

# DE NUEVO MÉXICO

## Historical Society of New Mexico 1991 Annual Meeting

### Society Awards Presented At Banquet

The 1991 annual conference of the Historical Society of New Mexico (HSNM), held in Las Cruces from April 18 to April 21, was attended by more than 200 people. The Doña Ana County Historical Society handled most of the organizational aspects, and the success of the conference was due in great part to their efforts.

The election results for HSNM officers and members of the board of directors were announced during the conference. Those elected were as follows: Robert R. White, president; John W. Grassham, first vice president; Darlis A. Miller, second vice president; Andres J. Segura, secretary; and Spencer Wilson, treasurer. Members of the board who were returned to office were David Townsend, William Lock, Austin Hoover, and M. M. Bloom, Jr. Newly elected to the board was Agnesa Reeve.

During the banquet and awards ceremony at the annual conference, held at the Holiday Inn in Las Cruces on April 20, the HSNM presented the following awards:

**The Gaspar Perez de Villagra Award** for the outstanding book relating to New Mexico history was given to Dr. Cheryl J. Foote for *Women of the New Mexico Frontier*, published by University Press of Colorado;

**The Ralph Emerson Twitchell Award** for significant contribution to the field of history was presented to Dr. Jesse Green for his work on Frank Hamilton Cushing, culminating in the publication last year by the University of New Mexico Press of his book *Cushing at Zuni*;

**The Edgar Lee Hewett Award** for service to the public — more specifically, for lifetime achievement in the study and writing of history — was given to Lee Myers of Las Cruces. Since 1961, Lee Myers has published approximately 50 articles and monographs on southwestern history. Until his retirement in the late 1960s, his research and writing were done in the time that he could spare from his job at the potash mines in Carlsbad. His many years of

historical research, done simply for the love of the subject, were cited at the awards ceremony as an admirable contribution to the field of history;

**The L. Bradford Prince Award** for historic preservation was presented to Cal and Nancy Thompson. The Thompsons restored the Palace Hotel in Silver City. Constructed in 1882 and enlarged in 1886, the building originally housed the Meredith & Ailman Bank. In 1990, owner Max Schutz created a ground-floor lobby from one of the storefronts, and converted the upper floor to hotel rooms, naming his establishment the Palace Hotel. Reopened in July 1990, the restored hotel contains 22 guest rooms and suites.

**The Paul A. F. Walter Award** for service to the Historical Society of New Mexico was presented to Col. M. M. Bloom, Jr. Col. Bloom served as treasurer of the Society for the past four years and volunteered his efforts in many ways, particularly with regard to organizing and computerizing the records of the HSNM;

**The Lansing B. Bloom Award** was presented to the *New Mexico Historical Review* in recognition of 65 years of excellence as the state's premier historical journal. Nancy Brown received the award on behalf of the *Historical Review* staff (Nancy Brown has been with the *Historical Review* for 15 years and was the 1985 recipient of the HSNM **Paul A. F. Walter Award** for service to the Society). Ms. Brown reminded those attending the banquet that the *New Mexico Historical Review* was founded by the Historical Society of New Mexico (an operational transfer to the University of New Mexico did not take place until the 1960s). She said that the journal owes much to the editors, contributors, subscribers, and readers who have supported it through the years, and she expressed the wish that the *Historical Review* and the Society would jointly have many more years of promoting history in New Mexico.

R.R.W.

## The Conservation Fund Seeks Donations To Purchase Glorieta Battlefield

The Conservation Fund is soliciting public donations to fund the acquisition of Glorieta Battlefield, announced Dr. Marc Simmons, President of the non-profit Glorieta Battlefield Preservation Society.

The battlefield, 17 miles southeast of Santa Fe, is the site of the decisive engagement of the 1862 Civil War campaign in New Mexico.

In 1990 the Arlington, Virginia-based preservation organization received \$1,766.09 from the Glorieta Battlefield Preservation Society (its entire treasury), and \$1,000 from the Santa Fe Trail Association to begin purchase of the battlefield.

Developments have progressed with increasing rapidity over the past months. The Conservation Fund purchased Pigeon's Ranch and Sharpshooter's Ridge in September of 1990, and in January 1991 acquired the entire 5,565 acres of Forked Lighting Ranch from Greer Garson (Mrs. Buddy Folkelson).

In addition, the United States Congress has

enacted legislation (signed into law by President Bush) to establish the Pecos National Historic Park of almost 6,000 acres. The older Pecos National Monument, which encompasses the stabilized ruins of the ancient Pecos Pueblo, has become a part of the newly expanded Historic Park.

Currently the Fund is negotiating to purchase additional acreage that lies within the Congress authorized boundaries of the "Glorieta Units" of the large Pecos National Historic Park.

Progress towards the development and interpretation of a park encompassing ancient Native American heritage, Spanish incursion and a more recent Civil War battlefield continues. Donations of money to fully implement the dream of such a vast undertaking — the Pecos National Historic Park — is still needed. Accordingly, people and organizations wishing to donate funds should make checks payable to The Conservation Fund, and send them to the Civil War Battlefield Campaign, PO Box 51, Cerrillos, New Mexico, 87010. □

## American Association for State and Local History Seeks Award Nominations

The Awards Program of the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) is designed to establish and encourage standards of excellence for state and local history. By focusing attention on the achievements of individuals and organizations in the field, the AASLH hopes to inspire others to give more care, thought and effort to their own projects.

Individuals (including those professionally employed in the field), groups, and organizations, whether publicly or privately financed, are eligible, including (but not limited to):

- state historical societies and agencies,
- regional, county, and local historical societies,
- individuals making significant contributions to state and local history, including authors, editors, and producers of film, video, and other audio-visual presentations,
- organizations contributing significantly to the understanding and development of local history or historical programs, such as business firms, labor unions, publishers, patriotic societies, newspapers, privately owned restorations, museums, and foundations.

Nominations are encouraged for meritorious work. In the case of a historical society, for example, the mere fulfillment of routine functions — unless it involves a radical change in policy — does not justify an award. The AASLH considers action over and above the ordinary call of duty to be the usual prerequisite for an award.

The AASLH recognizes such

achievements through four awards:

— The **Award of Merit** is for performance deemed excellent compared nationally with similar activities.

— The **Certificate of Commendation** is for superior work within the context of available means and regional standards.

— The **Award of Distinction** is reserved for an individual of national repute who has made significant contributions to state, provincial, and local history during his or her career.

The state AASLH awards chair receives the nominations and screens them initially, before sending them on to the regional chair, who in turn forwards them to the national chair of the AASLH Awards Committee. The Awards Committee convenes before the annual meeting of the AASLH, and carefully examines and evaluates all nominations forwarded to the national chair and selects the winners of the various awards.

At the AASLH 1991 Annual Meeting, held this year in Rochester, New York, New Mexico was given two certificates of Commendations: Joy Poole, Farmington Historical Museum, for promoting the interpretation of the Santa Fe Trail; and the Palace of the Governors, Museum of New Mexico, for efforts to bring before the public the Segesser Hide Paintings.

For flyers describing the AASLH Awards Program, and nomination forms, contact: Robert J. Torrez, AASLH State Awards Chair, Historical Society of New Mexico, P.O. Box 1912, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-5819; (505) 827-7332.

□

## Society Director John Wilson Receives Award

El Camino Real of this year's Pasajero is a broad highway of significant research and writing. Leading into and away from this Camino Real are many camino desviados. It is indeed difficult to mention a topic of Southwestern history, anthropology, or archaeology that John Wilson has not explored. And this exploration is primary research at its very best — searching out documentary and artifactual evidence to provide accurate accounts of pieces of our past.

John Wilson holds a doctorate in anthropology from Harvard University. His first work in New Mexico was an historical archaeologist with the Museum of New Mexico. Going far beyond the demands of specific assignments, John sought out and investigated sources of local, state and regional history. Especially interesting and invaluable to us in the Mesilla Valley are his unflagging efforts to locate copies of southern New Mexico's first newspaper, *The Mesilla Times*. A facsimile here, a photocopy there, one by one, extant issues were copied. Then he found transcripts from now missing numbers that had been reprinted in contemporary papers of the *Times*. Through his perseverance all of these have now been microfilmed for research by scholars who probably are unaware of PASAJERO John's exertions.

The purpose of the Pasajero del Camino Real Award is to recognize and acclaim an author for publication of a significant contribution to the historical

record of New Mexico. The specific book receiving recognition tonight is *Merchants, Guns, and Money: The Story of Lincoln County and Its Wars*. This is a history of Lincoln that precedes, encompasses, and follows the violent events of its dramatic conflict of 1878-1879. Cutting through the folklore of the banditry of the era, John Wilson utilized primary source material to provide a financial analysis and to focus attention on significant persons and events in all of the community's history.

But it is not enough to acclaim this one book. Often ignored in making such an award is the mass of solid research that an author has published in the form of professional journal articles and especially in historical, anthropological, and archaeological research reports. Since 1975 John Wilson has run his own business specializing in innovative research. His site inventories and historical profiles of such areas as southwestern New Mexico, Torrance County, and Fort Fillmore have been published by the Bureau of Land Management. His reputation gained from such published reports has brought him contract after contract with major commercial firms and government agencies.

For this beautiful book on Lincoln County, for the splendid research contributions on the history of New Mexico, and for his continuing to share his profound knowledge with other historians and writers, the Doña Ana County Historical Society appreciatively designates John P. Wilson as a **PASAJERO DEL CAMINO REAL**.

— Christine Myers

# Murder, Politics and the Administration of Justice in Frontier New Mexico: The Hanging of Perfecto Padilla

by Dr. Robert Torres

(A paper presented at the Historical Society of New Mexico Annual Conference, Las Cruces, New Mexico, April 19, 1991.)

On the morning of September 24th, 1896, two condemned prisoners were led out of the Rio Arriba County jail in the northern New Mexico village of Tierra Amarilla. Moments before, the two men had received the Last Rites from the local priest, and one can imagine how they must have shuddered as they stepped out into the crisp northern New Mexico air and viewed the gallows on which they were to pay the ultimate penalty for their crimes.

A few minutes after ten in the morning, Perfecto Padilla ascended the steps of the scaffold, and was hanged for the murder of a prospector who had disappeared in the mountains of northern New Mexico two years before. Moments later, Rosario Ring stepped under the gallows and suffered the same fate for killing a man during a drunken brawl the previous year.

Reports indicate Ring "died game." He gave speeches in Spanish and English, and explained how he had committed his crime while under the influence of whiskey and "cautioned his hangers against drinking the vile stuff."

Court records show Ring, who had several aliases, and Celestino Romero, a companion who was subsequently acquitted, were charged with shooting Carlos Ulibarri in the back during the course of a drunken brawl at Tierra Amarilla on September 16, 1895. The trial record leaves little doubt that Ring had killed Ulibarri. Ring himself admitted his guilt, and protested only the severity of his sentence. One report noted Ring was a hard-core criminal who was suspected of various other violent crimes, including the death of his own wife. A popular opinion was that Ring's execution had "removed a naturally bad [and] murderous man from earth."

Perfecto Padilla, on the other hand, protested his innocence to the very end. Padilla was about forty years old, a smallish, timid-looking man who does not seem to have been capable of the cold-hearted murder for which he was convicted. Married, with two children, he farmed a small parcel of land on shares near Cuba, New Mexico, in southern Rio Arriba County. By all indications, he was rather typical of the many small farmers who lived in this region of New Mexico.

So how did Padilla end up dangling from a rope on that fateful day in September of 1896? Was there any truth to his protestations of innocence? A review of the historical record indicates he may have had a point!

Perfecto Padilla was convicted of killing John Vipond, a prospector who was last seen alive on July 29, 1894 by Bernard J. McGinnis, William Feyerheim, and several others with whom he was prospecting along Rio Gallina in southern Rio Arriba County. Vipond separated from the main party with the view of rejoining them later, but they never saw him again. At first, they were concerned that something had happened to Vipond, but unable to find any evidence of foul play, concluded he had decided to venture out on his own.

Vipond remained missing, however, so in late September, Vipond's younger brother William organized a search party and began combing the hills in the vicinity of where Vipond was last seen. On October 4, the search party finally found the remains of a man which had



Perfecto Padilla, hanged at Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico, September 24, 1896. He was a small, timid looking man whose appearance belied the cold blooded killer image presented by prosecutors. (Photo courtesy of Aurelia Salazar.)

been scattered and mutilated by animals. These included a human skull which had been "crushed in on one side," and a prospector's pick with blood and hair on it. Nearby, they also found a Winchester rifle, a pistol, clothing which they recognized as belonging to Vipond, and a letter addressed to Vipond from his brother.

With this evidence in hand, Governor William T. Thornton issued a \$250 reward offer on October 10, 1894 for the arrest and conviction of Vipond's "unknown murder(s)." Two days later, McGinnis and Feyerheim, two of the men who had last seen Vipond alive, filed an affidavit which stated that one Perfecto Padilla and a young boy had come into their camp a few days after Vipond disappeared and that Padilla was "driving" two of Vipond's burros. They claimed to have questioned Padilla about how he got the burros and forced him to turn the animals over to them.

The same day, J.D. Bentley and Frank Plountenex also filed an affidavit in which they claimed to have heard Padilla had spent twenty or thirty dollars at a store in Cuba on or about August 5. They also claimed John Vipond had cashed a fifty dollar draft a few days before he disappeared.

An arrest warrant for Padilla was issued the same day these affidavits were filed. By October 20, Padilla had been arrested and taken to the county jail at Santa Fe by Santa Fe County Deputies Juan Delgado and J.W. Harris.

Padilla was held without charges at the Santa Fe County jail until February 1895. At that time it was apparently determined that since Vipond had been killed in Rio Arriba County, he should be transferred to the Rio Arriba County jail at Tierra Amarilla. He was held at Tierra Amarilla

until Rio Arriba grand jury issued an indictment against him for the murder of John Vipond on November 6, 1895. Court records do not explain the one year delay between his arrest and indictment, nor do they explain why Padilla was taken back to the Santa Fe jail on May 11, 1895, where he remained for almost four months before being returned to Tierra Amarilla.

Within a week of his indictment, a jury trial was convened and Padilla convicted of first degree murder. On November 23, the court imposed on Padilla the only sentence allowed for by territorial law of the time — death by hanging.

District Attorney Jacob H. Crist's case against Padilla was based on four principal factors. The first was testimony by H. Noel, proprietor of the store where Padilla bought supplies with the money he allegedly took from Vipond. District Attorney Crist spent a lot of time attempting to convince the jury that Padilla could never have earned the cash he had spent at Noel's store, and must have therefore acquired it from Vipond.

Additional critical testimony came from McGinnis and Feyerheim, who testified they had seen Padilla "drive" Vipond's burros into their camp a few days after Vipond disappeared. Padilla maintained throughout the trial he did not have Vipond's burros when he came upon McGinnis' camp. He insisted the burros were simply on the same trail he was following. Padilla also insisted that Polidor Martinez, the young boy who was with him, could verify that he was not "driving" the burros as claimed by McGinnis and Feyerheim.

Martinez, however, was no help. He was possibly twelve years old, and answered many of the questions directed at him with "I don't know," or simply re-

mained silent. A careful reading of the trial transcript seems to support Padilla's contention, that Vipond's burros were simply loose, and not being led or "driven" by anyone.

Pedro Olivas, another witness called by Padilla, directly contradicted Padilla's testimony on a third critical issue. According to the prosecution, Padilla had sold a watch in Santa Fe which was later identified as belonging to Vipond. Padilla contended he bought the watch from a man in Albuquerque and Olivas was with him when he had bought it.

Olivas, however, denied he was with Padilla when he bought the watch. Olivas said he and Padilla had driven some livestock to Albuquerque in early August of 1895, but that he had remained in the outskirts of the city while Padilla went into town to conduct some business. Padilla showed him a watch and told him he had bought it while in town.

Critical to understanding Martinez' and Olivas' testimony is the tone of the cross-examinations by Larkin G. Read, Padilla's defense attorney. Read repeatedly asked Olivas and Martinez whether they had been coerced or intimidated into testifying as they did. Olivas, at first, admitted the officer who subpoenaed him had told him to say he was not with Padilla but Olivas denied he had been coerced and no amount of cross examination convinced him to admit otherwise.

Martinez also admitted that Santa Fe County Sheriff William P. Cunningham, William C. Vipond, the victim's brother, and others had "talked" to him and tried to get him to say he had seen Padilla "drive the burros." Martinez also testified he had been warned by Sheriff Cunningham not to tell lies, or they would "do [him] some wrong." Martinez remained silent when Read asked him repeatedly if he felt he had been threatened. To Martinez' credit however, it must be noted, he never did say he saw Padilla "drive" the burros, as McGinnis and Feyerheim insisted. He repeatedly stated only that when he saw Padilla, the burros were in front of him.

One of the unfortunate aspects of researching this case is that much of Padilla's trial transcript is still untranscribed from the archaic Pittman shorthand used at the turn of the century, leaving many unanswered questions about the trial testimony. A Santa Fe Daily New Mexican story indicates that much of the evidence against Padilla had been gathered by William C. Vipond, John Vipond's brother. William Vipond reportedly spent several weeks conducting extensive investigations regarding his brother's death. It was William Vipond who is credited with uncovering the final piece of evidence which sent Padilla

to the gallows — an eyewitness to the murder.

The newspaper story does not identify this eyewitness, but it appears he was Jose Archibeque, one of those whose testimony has not been fully transcribed.

According to the newspaper report, Archibeque testified that on the afternoon of August 6, 1894, he was in the vicinity of Vipond's camp when he saw Padilla approaching.

Without explaining what he was doing there, Archibeque indicated he hid in the woods nearby, and from there, saw Padilla sneak up on Vipond while he slept and him with a pickax handle. Archibeque said he fled the scene because he feared for his own life, and remained silent until after he heard Padilla had been arrested.

Many questions about Archibeque's testimony must remain unanswered until it is fully transcribed. However, from other testimony, we are able to determine that he and Padilla were enemies. Apparently Padilla had somehow been implicated in connection with the death of Archibeque's brother several years earlier. Although someone else was eventually convicted of the murder, Archibeque none the less swore he would gain revenge on Padilla.

Defense attorney Read tried valiantly to discredit Archibeque's testimony, and show that much of the other testimony had been coerced. District Attorney Crist, however, delivered a masterful summation, during which he displayed John Vipond's skull to the jury and demonstrated how the pickax handle they had found "exactly fitted into the horrible dent therein." According to one report, Crist's theatrics, combined with Archibeque's eyewitness testimony, had a "telling effect" on the jury and they quickly returned a verdict of guilty of murder in the first degree.

Padilla was initially sentenced to hang on December 21, 1895. However, the execution was delayed while his case was appealed to the New Mexico Supreme Court. It took nearly a year for the Supreme Court to uphold the verdict and sentence, during which time Padilla and Ring were both apparently held at the Santa Fe county jail. Finally, on September 9, 1896, Governor William T. Thornton signed death warrants for both men.

On September 22, Rio Arriba County Sheriff Felix Garcia and two deputies picked up Padilla and Ring from the Santa Fe County jail. When Sheriff Garcia and his prisoners boarded the train at Santa Fe for the first leg of their trip back to Tierra Amarilla, they were accompanied by Santa Fe County Sheriff Cunningham and a group of "special deputies." One of the "special deputies"

was William Vipond, the victim's brother. Cunningham and Vipond were two of the men that Polidor Martinez and Pedro Olivas testified had "talked" to them about their testimony during Padilla's trial.

At Chamita, where the group transferred from the train to wagons, they were joined by a detachment of troops from Fort Marcy which had been ordered to accompany them to Tierra Amarilla. It had been reported there might be an attempt to free the prisoners, and the law was taking no chances.

However, the escort encountered no difficulties and the executions were carried out as scheduled. On September 24, 1896, Rio Arriba County Sheriff Felix Garcia submitted two signed death warrants, certifying he had carried out the executions and that Rosario Ring and Perfecto Padilla had been "hung by the neck until dead."

In and of itself, Perfecto Padilla's story is but one of the many chapters in the often violent history of frontier New Mexico. However, this story deserves more than cursory attention because the documentation leaves many unanswered questions which point to the possibility that Padilla may not only have been innocent of the crime for which he was executed but may have actually been framed by treacherous and powerful men who sought to use him for their own nefarious ends.

When viewed with historical hindsight, it seems Padilla was convicted principally on circumstantial evidence provided by defense witnesses who were coerced by Santa Fe County Sheriff William P. Cunningham and his deputies. The extant trial transcript also provided strong indications that the testimony of Jose Archibeque, the eyewitness, is at least suspect.

These things, however were not necessarily an uncommon occurrence for this time and place in our history. It is another, seemingly unrelated course of events which sheds a reasonable doubt on the question of Padilla's guilt. This issue involves one of the most celebrated and bitterly contested capital cases in New Mexico's history — District Attorney Jacob H. Crist's prosecution of Francisco and Antonio Gonzales y Borrego and two accomplices who had been convicted of the 1892 politically motivated murder of Francisco Chavez. The Borregos and two accomplices were represented by Thomas B. Catron, a Santa Fe attorney, Republican political figure, and land grant speculator, whose name is frequently mentioned in the same breath as the Santa Fe Ring. Catron also happened to be a bitter political enemy of District Attorney Crist, a Democrat.

In early September, 1895, Wilnot E. Broad, a Rio Arriba businessman and staunch fellow Republican, wrote Catron and told him of a rumor that Crist had offered immunity to someone named "Padia" in exchange for testimony against the Borregos. A few days later, Padilla himself wrote to Catron from his cell at Tierra Amarilla and informed Catron that District Attorney Crist and Sheriff Cunningham had taken him to Santa Fe.

"They wanted me to declare in the court that I had pretended to be asleep in the cell next to the Borregos and that I had overheard them saying secretly that they had killed the deceased Chavez; furthermore, [they] wanted me to say I had witnessed the killing . . ."

Padilla noted that in exchange for his testimony, Crist and Cunningham promised him they would drop all charges and provide him with money. He also charged that Crist and Cunningham had made similar offers to other prisoners. Padilla makes it clear he was aware Crist and Catron were embroiled in a bitter political battle, and offered to testify on

of Read's cross examination of the witnesses during Padilla's trial.

There is no evidence of further communications between Padilla and Catron, and strangely, it appears the question of Crist's offer to Padilla was never raised during his trial. During the year following Padilla's conviction, Catron became involved with the disbarment case filed against him, and he obviously had matters other than Padilla on his mind.

Recent developments add to questions of Padilla's guilt. In 1965, a Mr. G. Swain wrote to the State Records Center and Archives in Santa Fe and requested information about Padilla's trial. In his letter, Mr. Swain stated Padilla was hanged for a crime he did not commit. He stated the "real murderer" had later been "filled with remorse" and confessed his crimes to a priest. Mr. Swain, however, does not specify who the "real murderer" was and how he came about this information.

An anonymous letter written in 1988 to the Rio Grande Sun in Espanola, New Mexico, in response to a story they published about Padilla's hanging, states it is common knowledge in parts of Rio Arriba County who had killed Vipond, and that it was not Padilla. Others contend Vipond found gold on the Rio Gallina, and that his alleged cache has yet to be found, adding another chapter to New Mexico's "lost treasure" legends.

Who killed John Vipond if not Padilla? Could it have been Archibeque, the alleged eyewitness? How about the mysterious man from whom Padilla claimed to have bought the incriminating watch in Albuquerque? What reason would McGinnis, Feyerheim, and the others have to file false or misleading affidavits against Padilla? Is it really possible that a man could be sent to the gallows for refusing to cooperate with the insidious public officers entrusted with the administration of justice in the courts of territorial New Mexico?

It should also be noted that up to this point, the court record clearly shows that despite having been held in jail since his arrest in October 1894, Padilla had not been charged with any crime whatsoever! The Rio Arriba grand jury which eventually indicted Padilla for Vipond's murder in November 1895 was still two months away from being convened.

In response to these letters, Catron dashed off a note to Alexander Read, an attorney at Tierra Amarilla, and asked him to look into Padilla's allegations. Catron told Read that Crist had listed Padilla as one of the witnesses he would present in the Borrego case, but decided not to call him because Padilla had demanded a pardon before he testified. It was a decision which cost Padilla his life.

It is noteworthy that Larkin Read, Padilla's defense attorney during the November 1895 trial is Alexander Read's brother. Padilla's allegations of widespread intimidation and coercion of witnesses would also explain the nature

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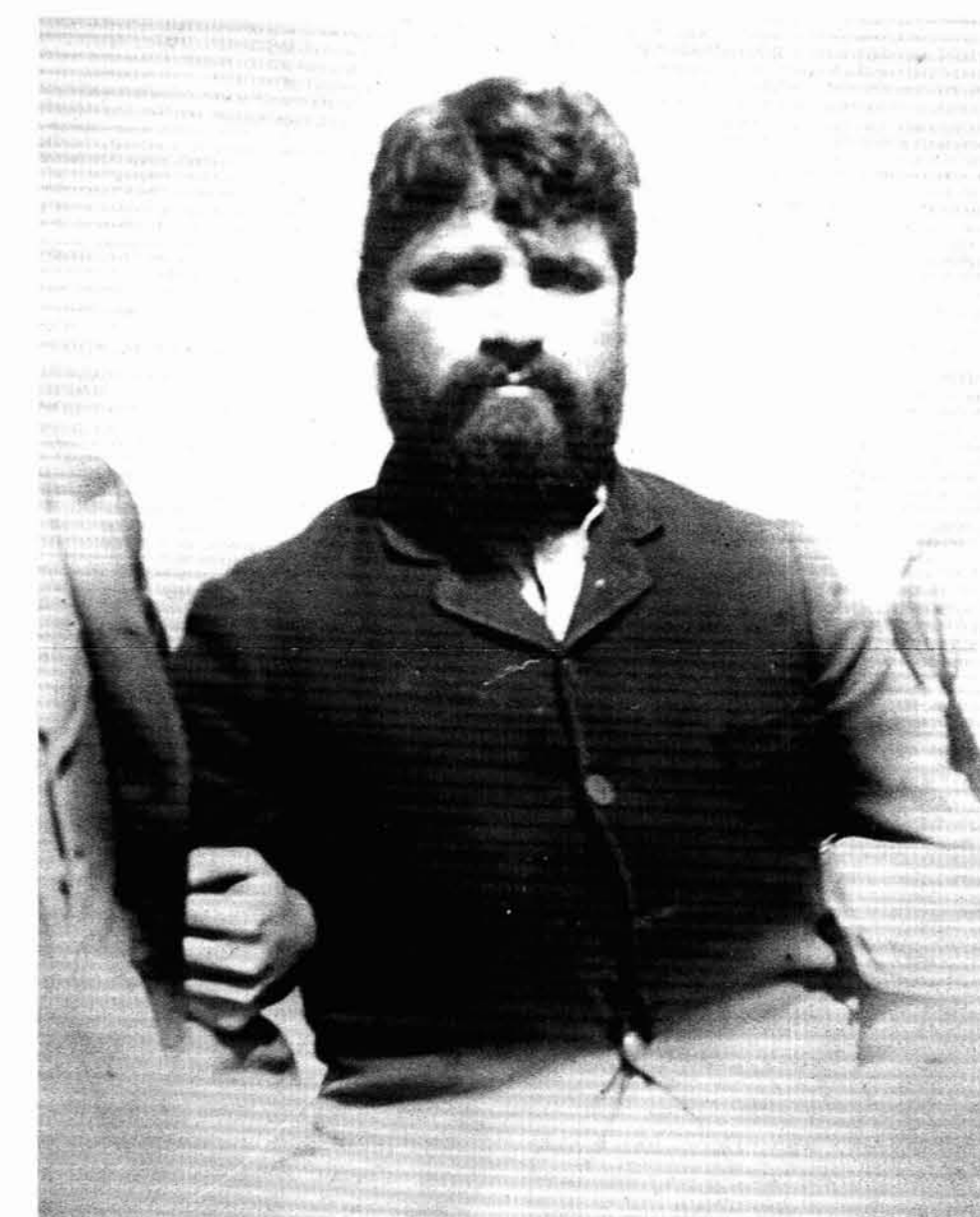
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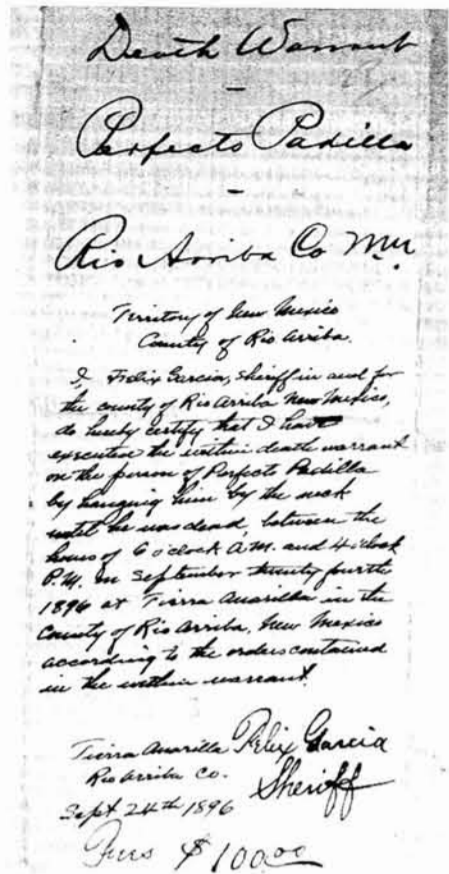
District Attorney Jacob H. Crist (left) and land grant baron Thomas B. Catron (right) were bitter enemies who faced each other in the courtroom in numerous criminal and civil cases.



Rosario Ring, hanged the same day as Padilla, was a bellicose and brash hardened criminal, in sharp contrast to his cell mate. (Photo courtesy of Aurelia Salazar.)

## MURDER (Continued)

found, the truth behind who killed John Vipond will, like his fabled treasure, remain buried. For now, we can only con-



Completed death warrant, certified by Rio Arriba County Sheriff Felix Garcia that he had carried out the execution of Perfecto Padilla. (NM Records Center & Archives.)

tend, that in all probability, Perfecto Padilla died not for any crime he may have committed, but because he was probably a convenient pawn, sacrificed by powerful men intent on shaping the vanishing frontier for their own ends, whatever those ends may have been.

—R.J.T.

(Biographical Note: The materials in this essay are primarily based on Rio Arriba County District Court criminal case #1090, Territorial Supreme Court #649, and Governor William Thornton penal records (TANM 127), all at the State Records Center and Archives. Additional information is from contemporary newspapers and the Catron Collection at UNM.)

## A Remembrance: The Way To Taos

by Walter Davis

Editor's Note: Walter Davis came to New Mexico at least twice a year for some twenty years. Walter, who is now retired, was a manufacturers' representative. Over those many years he introduced the finest lines of gourmet cookware to retail stores in New Mexico.

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John P. Wilson

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Some of you will remember the Centerline store in Santa Fe, owned by this editor and his partner, David Lent. Walter's visits were welcome and productive days. He sold to us; some of you then bought his products from us. Walter became a dear, close friend. This remembrance carries fond memories for me and, I am sure, for many of you who enjoyed those days of "Frenchie" and La Dona Luz.

JPC

During the 1950s, the 1960s, and into the early 1970s, there was a wonderful restaurant in Taos, New Mexico, run by a tall gangly Frenchman known throughout the territory as "Frenchie". The restaurant menu card carried the name LA DONA LUZ. The selection was extensive and impressive. It did New Mexico proud with the wine selections and, quite frequently, fresh 'out of season' delectables which always surprised and pleased the clientele. "Frenchie" ruled the restaurant like an autocrat, with sharp attention to all details... food, drinks, and service. Culinary Art was serious business with him; his heritage was remembered and respected.

The summer of 1967, perhaps wearying a bit, he felt the need of a "sous-chef" and thought, quite naturally, that his aide must be French, too. He flew to Paris, interviewed, hired a young man, and returned to Taos. The young chef wanted to bring his small Renault with him and elected to come by ship with the car.

Several weeks later the phone rang in Taos... the new helper had arrived in New York City. "Frenchie" queried as to his whereabouts and the boy's reply was, "They tell me I am at the corner of 9th Avenue and 34th St. How do I get to Taos?"

"It is very simple," was the quick reply, "listen carefully. Go down two blocks to 32nd Street — turn Right through the Lincoln Tunnel to Chicago — turn Left on Route 66 until you reach Cline's Corner, then Right to Taos."

2,165 miles later there was Taos and La Dona Luz. Behind him stretched the New Jersey Turnpike, the Ohio Turnpike, Chicago, and all of the many miles and cities of Route 66... St. Louis, Tulsa, Oklahoma City. Now the route is variously numbered Interstate routes. Perhaps the lad had even memorized all of the words to a current musical hit of that time — "GET YOUR KICKS ON ROUTE 66," popularized by Nat King Cole. One wonders how many times he might have stopped to inquire the whereabouts of Cline's Corner? It is just a clover-leaf intersection in the wide expanse that is the LAND OF ENCHANTMENT. W.D.

**1992 N.M. Historical Society Annual Meeting**  
**Durango, Colorado**  
**April 30 — May 3, 1992**

**FROM:**  
**La Crónica de Nuevo México No. 32**  
**HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO**  
**Post Office Box 1912**  
**Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504**

**TO:**

## BOOKS:

### The Pueblo Indian Revolt of 1696 and the Franciscan Missions in New Mexico: Letters of the Missionaries and Related Documents

by Manuel Espinosa, who also did the translations and introduction. Published by University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Avenue, Norman, OK 7301. 332 pages, \$27.95.

Reviewed by Fern Lyon

Santa Fe's September Fiesta celebrates the *Entrada of Don Diego de Vargas into Santa Fe 13 years after the Pueblo revolt of 1680 had driven the Spanish out of New Mexico. The Fiesta leaves onlookers with the impression that life in New Mexico in following years was filled with beautiful maidens in gorgeous clothes and handsome young men in even more gorgeous clothes and armament riding on beautiful horses while happy paisanos and peaceful Indians gathered round. It's a pleasant myth, but if you want to know what was really going on after the entrada, read this book.*

The author thoughtfully provides his readers with a history of 17th century New Mexico from Oñate to Governor Vargas before getting to the letters and

documents he has translated. The translations convey the flavor of official and religious documents of the period, but that does mean a lot of formal verbiage to struggle through.

Once you get the hang of reading for the content in the letters and documents, (and get accustomed to the fact that both the Governor and the Franciscan custodian are named Vargas) you begin to understand the personalities, the temperaments, the mounting terror of a revolt that was unmistakably building at the missions' Pueblos. At the same time, the Governor was obviously being constantly harrassed by the "reverend fathers," by the slow communications of the day, and by the lack of money and resources. (Much of the military action, he points out, was "at my own expense.") Here are the day-to-day problems of the people who were attempting to retake a rebellious province, to convert "obstinate Indians" into meek Christians, to protect the faith and its symbols, to provide a promised land for incoming Spanish settlers, and to cope with the inadequacies of a State which expected them to do all this but was often unable or unwilling to help.

The book provides fascinating reading for anyone interested in New Mexico history, and invaluable primary source material for historians.

F.L.

## New Mexico Historical Society Offers Books at Discount to Members

### Place Your Christmas Gift Orders Soon

The Historical Society of New Mexico, in partnership with the University of New Mexico Press over the past several years, has seen a series of interesting and valuable books published. These books should be available at your local bookstore, or, at a discount of 20% from the Society. Books currently in print, and their suggested retail prices are:

- Baxter, John: *Las Carneradas. The Sheep Trade in NM.* cloth 22.50, paper 10.95.
- Bender, Norman J.: *New Hope for the Indians: The Navajos in the 1870s.* cloth 29.95, paper 14.95.
- Bender, Norman J.: *Missionaries, Outlaws, Indians.* paper 9.95.
- Chew, Joe: *Storms Above the Desert.* cloth 22.50, paper 11.95.
- Cutter, Charles: *Protector de Los Indios.* cloth 17.50, paper 8.95.
- Delaney, Robert W.: *Ute Mountain Utes.* cloth 24.95
- Ellis, Bruce T.: *Bishop Lamy's Santa Fe Cathedral.* cloth 19.95, paper 10.95.
- Garcia, Nasario: *Recuerdos de Los Viejitos.* cloth 17.50, paper 9.95.
- Lecompte, Janet: *Rebellion in Rio Arriba.* paper 9.95.
- Pearson, Jim: *The Red River - Twining Area.* cloth 19.95, paper 10.95.
- Reeve, Agnesa: *From Hacienda to Bungalow.* cloth 24.95, paper 12.95
- Sandweiss, Martha: *Denizens of the Desert.* cloth 24.95.
- Sheppard, Carl: *Creator of the Santa Fe Style.* cloth 22.50, paper 12.50.
- Taylor, Michael: *Along the Rio Grande: A Pastoral Visit to Southwest New Mexico in 1902.* cloth 17.50, paper 8.95.
- Voute, Peter: *Stranger in New Mexico.* cloth 22.50, paper 10.95.

In addition to the publishing program with the University of New Mexico, the Society has acquired all remaining unsold copies of the revised and enlarged 1963 edition of *Records and Maps of The Old Santa Fe Trail* by Kenyon Riddle. The price to our members is \$20.00 for the book and the packet of 8 maps.

The most recent book published for the Historical Society of New Mexico by the University of New Mexico Press was *Reluctant Frontiersman — James Ross Larkin on the Santa Fe Trail, 1856-57*, edited and annotated by Barton H. Barbour, with a foreword by Marc Simmons. This is the 21st book in the HSNM-UNM Press co-publication series.

If ordering through the Society, please include \$2.50 for shipping and handling. Order from: Historical Society of New Mexico, P.O. Box 1912, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504, or call John P. Conron in Santa Fe at (505) 983-6948 to place an order.

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