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THE APUNTES OF FATHER J. B. RALLIERE

By FLORENCE HAWLEY ELLIS AND EDWIN BACA

Introduction

FROM time to time in the Southwest, old papers from *los días de cuanto hay* come out of the chests and boxes inherited by descendants or friends of native families who pioneered in this area. These documents may be of more importance to local and regional history than to national annals. But when placed in context supplied by records of larger events or by the memories of old timers, they provide the intimate picture of people, customs, and reactions which lend perspective to more important contemporary issues. Such a document is that containing the commentaries on some issues of special concern to Father John Baptist Ralliere,¹ pastor of the Tomé church and of the numerous *visitas* under its jurisdiction for fifty-three years.

In 1849, after New Mexico came under the control of the United States, the diocese of Santa Fe was separated from that of Durango. Jean Baptiste Lamy who had come from Claremont, France, to work in the parishes of Ohio and Kentucky, was selected to become first Vicar Apostolic of Santa Fe.

His bishopric covered New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, and Nevada, the peripheries being vaguely defined. In recognition of the primary need for religious workers, he first brought a group of the Sisters of Loretto to Santa Fe and then, in 1854, on a brief business trip to see the Pope, picked up what recruits he could in Italy and France. He returned to America with three priests and four seminarians from his old school in Claremont and a Spanish priest who had been a missionary in Africa.

In 1856 Bishop Lamy sent Father Machebeuf to France to recruit more missionaries. His appeal in the Seminary of

1. In making a point of identification with his parishioners, Ralliere used the English and Spanish forms of his given and middle names rather than the French form with which he was baptised. His *Apuntes* and letters are written in Spanish, with a rare slip into French.

Montferrand brought six seminarians, among whom was John B. Ralliere.

The lives to which these men went had little of ease, no matter in what corner of New Mexico. Apart from the local suspicions which must be allayed, conditions of life were harsh in the villages and a thousand times more so on the horseback and wagon trips which led them from *visita* to *visita* in their large parishes. Military escorts were the usual security against Indians in some areas; elsewhere the men were on their own. None were killed; all gained friends and some, as Father Ralliere, came to be considered almost as one of the saints by a large portion of his parishioners. Although his name rarely is found in print, his memory remains bright in Tomé, where he served from 1858 to 1911. At his death, forty-two years ago, four years after he had retired from the pulpit because of ill health, his body was buried in a homemade coffin of four boards beneath the rough wooden floor of his church.

A detailed diary from the pen of any one of the priests of the early American period could have provided invaluable data on the times. None had leisure for such a literary venture, although their letters and papers have contributed to history. Father Ralliere did keep a few pages of notations in diary form, but they consist only of names of persons or of items evidently intended to remind him of some matter. Fortunately, however, in his later years he set down a series of *Apuntes* or "Notes," of quite another type. The incomplete manuscript in which he recorded some of the local events occurring between 1872 and 1909 was found by Mrs. Felicitas Sedillo de Montaña of Tomé and kindly offered for the present translation and publication.² It was written between 1905 and 1909 in a fine hand, in Spanish (except for an occasional French word or phrase and the consistent use of the French article *le* in place of the Spanish article *el*), upon legal size paper. Some pages show lines ruled off before writing began.

2. Masses of letters and papers were burned after his death but Mrs. Montaña, who had worked in his household and whose brother, during most of his life, had been closely associated with Father Ralliere as his organist, saved the pages of this notebook as a memento.

In relatively few cases does the penmanship become so cramped that reading is difficult.

Certain parts are imperfect, the work of a man mortally tired and ill after a hard life of service. The events recorded were of major importance to Father Ralliere and, in part, to the village. How he chanced to begin these notes is unknown. It is said that in the latter days of his life he became somewhat crabbed and bitter, as he never had been earlier. This was the result of ill health and recurrent battles with some of his parishioners, which left him convinced that his long efforts and his ideal of aid to the community were not appreciated. The "Notes" seem to have been written for no purpose other than as a contemplation of past events in the writing of which he re-considered his own motives as well as those of others. One can hardly call it a matter of retrospection and self-justification for there is no evidence of a troubled conscience "explaining" to itself. One feels, instead, that here is a record of events just as he saw them and that if confronted with the same situations again he would react just as in the first instance.

It is clear that he was a very honest, sensitive, and intelligent person. His solutions to problems show clear thinking and ingenuity. If he seems to have been more resolute than tactful, it was because he was thoroughly convinced of the reason and rightness of his movements, a point in which his modern reader concurs. The difficulties which brought about these problems were those of typical Spanish individualism and competition. Until recently each farmer was almost the absolute master of his premises, for which he wrested what was needed from the environment or from others of the community. Distrust, thus bred, extended to the local priest who not only was likewise a farmer — and hence a competitor — but also, in this case, a representative of the conquering "Americanos" and hence perhaps desirous of despoiling the local peoples of lands or moneys. Tithing, dropped in New Mexico during the Mexican period at the pleas of Father Martínez that the populace could not afford such contributions, were re-imposed by Bishop Lamy through his priests. Their collection did not endear the regime to land-

owners. Father Ralliere always held a body of friends but frequently he also had enemies, a matter which puzzled him, and some men moved from one group to the other as their personal interests dictated.

Father Ralliere never was a passive man. The role of an energetic French priest in one of the oldest Spanish communities in New Mexico was not easy. His ultimate success appears in the tales of the old men of today, who remember that he was ever able to see the humor in any situation, that he had a *dicho* (saying) for every occurrence of daily life, and that through his leadership "He made labor sweet, inspired the desire for heavenly joy and glory, and earned the nickname "*Padre eterno*."

In Ralliere we see the idealist and something of that mercurial spirit which we are apt to attribute to Frenchmen; these were traits which endeared him to his friends among laymen and clergy. His enemies no doubt considered him both hot and hard-headed, even as he would have characterized them. He suffered most at their misunderstanding of his altruistic motives and positivistic concept of "right," but he never flinched from a position taken. We may think that he could have managed a smoother road to the successful outcome of many of his plans had he concentrated his understanding upon human relationships and the foibles of mankind as he did upon the more material needs of his parish, but this was not a part of his uncompromising nature. If his notes give something of an egoistic impression in places, one must remember that they were written without the veneer of proper modesty imposed by our culture when speaking of one's self to someone else. Here an old man re-lives, as something of a scrupulous self-judgment, his own actions, decisions, and intentions, and the problems which were their background in the periods of special stress in his life span.

Apuntes

[The start of Father Ralliere's *Apuntes* seems to have been a record he jotted down in 1905, the names of the priests who had attended the annual retreat of that year. He was

seventy-three years old at the time; the list may have been merely an aid to his memory].

Present at the Retreat, Aug. 21-25, 1905

Monsieur Bourgade, Monsieur Pitaval, Fourchegú — Vicar Besset — Plantard — Giraud — Vicar Delaville — Garnier (San Juan) — Jouvenceau (Park View) — Courbon Seux (San Juan) — Alverne Mariller (Rito) — Alterman (Santa Cruz) — Medina (Peñasco) — Garcia (Costilla) — Balland (Mora) — M. Ribera (Sapello) — Gilberton V. Thomas, Cooney (Raton) — Ceillier (Springer) — Lamerth — Splinters (Chiquito) — Gatignol (Anton Chico) — Casals (San Miguel) — Paulhan (Pecos) — Barrau (Sanatorium) — Derocher — Rabeyrolles (Santa Fe) — Coudert — Chassier — Docher (Isleta) — Juillard — M. Dumarest (Gallup) — Picard (Belen) — Ralliere (Tomé) — Martin (Socorro) — Pelser (San Marcial) — Kriel (Monticello) — Girma (Lincoln) — Gauthier (Manzano) — Alf. Halterman (Santa Rosa).³

[Two years later, farther down the same page he noted the men with whom he had been in retreat that season]

Retreat 22 day of August 1907 —

Plantaro, Kriel, Martin, Picard, Docher, Juillard, Barrau, Seux, Hartman, Courbon, Alverne, Giraud, Pajet, Balland, Gilberton, Molinier, Cooney, Ceillier, Dumarest, Lamerth, Olier, Gatignol, Splinters, Moog, Paulhan, Fourchegú, Redon, Gauthier, Girma, Rabeyrolles, Alf. Halterman, Garnier, Castagnet, Deraches, Bertrome, Delaville, Pugens, Besset, Th. Vincent, Charnier — Absent Ribera, Pelzer, Poiyot, A. Jouvenceau, Medina

[The remainder of this page is left blank except for a sentence of memorandum at the bottom.

Aubrey made the trip from Kansas City to Santa Fe in 8 days. This was quick transportation in comparison with the weeks remembered for freighting by team or ox cart across the plains, the old system by which Ralliere had imported his

3. Ralliere in most cases wrote the names of the parishes which these priests represented in small letters; we have here capitalized and added parentheses. Most of these men are listed in J. B. Salpointe, *Soldiers of the Cross*, 1898, p. 206.

church bells, organs for various chapels and individuals, and the few items of urban living which could be afforded.

On his next page, apparently written on January 11 or 12, 1905, Ralliere speaks briefly of rains and small floods, a matter of ever-watchful concern to residents of Tomé. On repeated occasions during his residence there, as well as before — and since (until flood control was given serious governmental attention in the early 1930's) — this town and others in the lowlands where farming was best were almost destroyed by freshets which overflowed the banks of the Rio Grande or broke through to form new channels. Adobe structures, so well suited to a dry climate, after several days of rain or of water at the foundations collapsed. While families fled to the hills or to other towns, their fields were torn, new swamps created, and animals drowned. The priest stayed with his people, holding services, encouraging them, and aiding in directing what repairs might be accomplished]

1905. On the 10, 11, of January sleet fell; for two days all the houses leaked frighteningly. The field was very damp, the roads very bad. On Dec. 3, 1904, other rain had fallen for a day. On the 8th of Oct., 1904, another for one day. The 29th of Sept., 1904 — In these two rains the river overflowed at Chicál [a farm area belonging to and just south of Isleta pueblo], at Bosque de Los Pinos⁴ [now known as Bosque Farms, just north of Peralta] at the place of Polidor Chaves, and at Valencia. 25 houses were under water and in danger of collapsing.

In the previous year there had been a drought terrible for farms, for cattle. The river dried up in March and afterwards ran at intervals.

In the year 1903 the river rose terribly in May, June, overflowed at Chicál and later dried up entirely.

The Plaza of Tomé so far has escaped [the water] but is seriously threatened by the river one mile to the north.

[Ralliere here breaks his record of floods to note the death of a friend]

4. Location of the *Fortaleza* (Fort) of early American and Civil war period. Here military escorts were available for the priests and other travelers going through Indian areas.

Father Noel Dumarest⁵ died the 13th of January in the Sanatorium of Albuquerque and was buried on the 17th in Peña Blanca (Rest in Peace) where he had been curate various years. 1905

At present [during flood of January, 1905] I stay in Peralta at the house of Aniceto Gurulé,⁶ Ofelia Griego — Eraclio de Pole [sacristan of Peralta church, a *visita* of the Tomé parish] moved to Albuquerque and returned to me the keys to the church. I had thought of closing the [Peralta] church but Margarita Toledo and Ofelia caught up with me and offered a house. [His own house was next to the church in the Tomé plaza.] It is the house which formerly belonged to Ofelia R. de Connelly, spacious. But now it is full. Here live Hilario Griego, Pilar Romero, Eliseo Griego, Lucinda Gurulé, Daniel Gurulé, Luz Cisneros, Jesus Gurulé of 80 years, Rafael Gurulé, and Margarita. They are near the house of their daughter, Francisca, the wife of Remigio Chaves. All of these people lost their houses in October [the *Cañada de la Cabra* flood].

How many houses I have moved between since 1872 when I began to offer mass in Peralta. The housés of El Negro Sanchez, Peregrina Luz Chaves, wife of Ambrosio Chaves, Manuel R. Otero, Pilar Romero, Lola Chaves, Juan Gurulé, Desiderio Gurulé, Josefa Cobos, Rafael Gurulé, Aniceto Gurulé.

[Father Ralliere again interrupts his account to note some details he has just recalled — or been given — concerning Dumarest.]

Noel Dumarest was born December 10, in Lyon — 1868 — he came to N.M. 1893 — ordained, he was lieutenant [assistant] to Rev. Father Redon — Anton Chico — Pastor at Peña Blanca — 1900 pastor at Springer — 1902 went to France — 1901 Chaplain of the hospital.

[The first lengthy account in the big Ralliere notebook written at intervals between July 29 (or perhaps began even

5. Well known among anthropologists for his small but valuable monograph on Cochiti Pueblo, edited by Elsie Clews Parsons from notes Dumarest recorded while stationed at Peña Blanca. Father N. Dumarest, "Notes of Cochiti, New Mexico," *Memoirs*, Amer. Anth. Assoc., 6, Pt. 3, 1920.

6. Most of the persons here mentioned are represented by relatives in Tomé today.

earlier in the spring) and November 4, 1905, is neatly titled as an account of the last of the many disastrous floods which struck Tomé during Father Ralliere's years there. For his forthright actions in cutting ditches to drain some of the water back into the river, he paid a heavy price in the enmities of self-centered owners — over which he suffered much anguish — as well as an actual fine set by court action. This episode became one of the sorest points in the memories of his declining years, and touched his gay disposition with bitterness. It may also explain his concentration upon floods in these *Apuntes*]

THE RIVER FLOOD OF MAY 23, 1905

The legislation passed a law creating the River Commission. For this group members were Abran Kempenich and Bernardino Cedillo. In March "burros" [levies] were built in Chicál, in Bosque de los Pinos, in Los Chavez, in Valencia, in Tomé, and in La Constancia. For some years the river has been eating away the banks at San Fernando towards the east. About ten years ago [erosion] carried away the acequia. A "burro" was built which the river carried away, and then another which Don Guillermo Chavez supervised and the town constructed it at my own insistence and re-formed and strengthened it. It held the river for several years especially during the height of the flood of Sept. 27, 1904. When the river broke through [its banks] at four points north of Tomé, this "burro" did not break, thanks to the care of the people. In March 1905 Bernardino made another "burro" further down [south] of ten yards width at the base and five on top, of solid sod blocks — very good — carried in the arms [of the people].

Several of the principal men were opposed to this tremendous task, thinking it better to reinforce the old "burro" farther north but thanks to God Bernardino went ahead with his idea. The gentlemen mentioned in fact brought about great harm by asking adjournment to sow their wheat. This was the cause of Bernardino reducing the width of the "burro" and when the river [flood] came to the "burro" José

Baca who was deputy commissioner lost precious time widening the "burro" where it was not thick enough. The river reached the "burro" on Saturday, May 20, and all the people of Tomé, some 80 men, last Sunday, the 21st, [were] digging up mud and sods from beneath the water. Above [farther north] the river was eating away [the land]; it took the acequia, a "water check," then another, and it flowed along a little valley at La Casa Vieja, the old house of Don Bartolomé Baca, Governor of New Mexico. Then very late on Monday, the 22nd, they thought of making a "burro" to await [meet] the flood water, but they did not build it high or wide enough and they abandoned it. On Tuesday, the 23rd at 7 in the morning when the people thought to strengthen the "burro," the river was on its way humming [in swift current] towards Tomé. Twenty men came from Casa Colorado to help, a useless trip. They waited in a group in front of the house of Santos Barela, to divert the course of the current. They opened the drainage ditch of Tavalopa. José Baca went out to break the lateral ditch of Toribio Archuleta and F^{co}. Salazar but did not dare do it because Catalino Montaña opposed him because he (Montaña) did not want to lose his wheat [from flooding]. When I learned of this, seeing that all this water would come and cover the plaza, that it needs must drown the church and all the houses, I went at noon and had three openings made which [soon] became immense gulleys which will be seen for many years. The rest of the water leaped upon Jerusalem, Tavalopa,⁷ and felled or at least flooded about 25 houses [belonging to]: Santos Barela, [Doña] Felipa — Miguel Perea Projedes — Celestino Marquez, Daniel Luçero, house of Jose Chiquito — Antonio Montaña — Celsa — Estevan Cedillo Ana — Ruperto Perea Natividad — Juan Perea Ofelia⁸ — Maria wife of deceased Querino Perea — Francisco Perea Juana — Lorenza — Juan Marquez Rebecca — Ignacio Varela Eulalia — Juan Lujan Merced — Juan Lujan Jr. — Maria Castillo — Nicanor Zamora Seferina — Jose de Jesus Piedad — Antonio Saiz Ade-

7. Ralliere's humorous designation of outlying "suburbs" of Tomé. The northwest section he called "Tavalopa." The southeast section was "Jerusalem."

8. J. B. R. in this list mentioned the first name of a wife after the first name and surname of husband. Ex.: Juan Perea Ofelia refers to Juan Perea and his wife, Ofelia.

laida — Jose Baca Maria Jaramillo — Octaviano Baca Carmelita — Francisco Salazar Nestora — Toribio Archuleta Lugarda — Francisco Otero Estefana — Amada Barela, Margarita.

By night Manuel moved his family [which now] cooks in the house which he bought from Nicolas Baca, husband of Climaca. I stayed with Proceso in order to say mass next day and to take out Our Lord. All night long Daniel Lucero, Pancho Salazar, Ricardo Enriquez, Manuel Salazar, and Jemenez, Laureano Jaramillo walked around with lanterns watching the progress of its water in my fenced-in land. In the morning a current of water was flowing at the foot [of the wall] of my school house and at the east of the convent, without reaching the foundation of the church nor of the convent. There was considerable dry patio to the west of the convent, and dry also was the shady lane under the poplars to the east. The drainage ditch of my fields held back much water and made it run along the highway which became an arroyo impossible for travel.

I spent 47 days in the foothills. It was Tuesday when the river entered. I stayed at home [that day] to say mass and to take out Our Lord. At midnight Manuel Torres arrived, he awakened me saying: What are you doing here? By morning there will not be a dry spot on which to hitch the horses. But it was as I predicted, the patio was dry. Rosita took advantage of the time to clean her house. She fixed for me [in the foothill community] a very clean room, very cool, with a good view to the south. I visited all the neighbors in Cerro and those who had fled there [from the flood], among these Jose Baca Maria, Juan Cedillo Teresa — Quirino and his son Julian Amanda — Antonio Montañó Celsa, Santos Barela Felipa — Nicanor Zamora Seferina — Adelaida and Antonio Saiz — Amado Barela Margarita.

Each day I visited my ranch⁹ where José de la Luz Barela de Maria Jesus lives — old like myself. I sowed 25 pounds of alfalfa and thought to sow another 25 pounds near the garden. But water did not run in the Cerro acequia. The first

9. Close to Cerro, a suburb of Tomé near the base of Cerro de Tomé, the volcanic hill which marks the north end of the Tomé land grant.

three weeks Manuel lost. Every day he went to the plaza to feed the farm animals and the chickens and he stayed all day. On the last Sunday of May should have been [the date for] the 40 hour devotion. Of course nothing took place. On the Sundays when mass should have been given in Tomé I offered it among the trees [at the home] of Jose Cedillo. Here I gave the mass for rain. I held Corpus Christi at Casa Colorado on Thursday, June 22; in Valencia, the day of the mass of water [June] 24; in Peralta, Sunday the 25th. On week days I gave mass in the little parlor of our house. They played and sang hymns at mass each day — Clotilde, Teresa, Quirina, Celsa, Serna, Guadalupe Varela — here we finished the month of Mary [May]. On June 10 we returned to the plaza after 47 days. The plaza was very dry. The 9th day of July was 20 D^{oo}. In the morning I went to Valencia. On my way back I visited all Tavalopa and Bella Vista where all had returned from Cerro. I arrived at home at three in the afternoon. They called me for a confession at Picuris [in the Peralta foothills]— 30 miles that day at a trot [of my horse].— Twice I opened discussions concerning draining the stagnant waters in Tavalopa and later I was not able to find a soul. The day when Julian Zamora thought of doing a little work, then Ramon Otero built the Camino Real [highway] and made the drainage impossible. This water makes all the houses of the town very damp and even now, July 29, this dampness is eating the walls of my house. Manuel repaired the new corral. The south wall was weakened since the rains, and he was able to pen all the horses as usual. There is no other corral in all the town except for the rear corral of Juan Salazar. For a month no one stayed in the plaza [center of town] except Pancho Salazar and Daniel Lucero. The water came up to their doors. Some people stayed on the other side of the acequia and at Cerro and in Ranchos. Celso Salazar made a "burro" just north of his place and [thus] saved his house.

I have not mentioned above that during Holy Week, April 22; from Saturday until Monday, it rained so much that there was not a house which did not leak. I had one free corner in my room near the cabinet where it was dry, except for a drop which fell on my chest. I spread out my cape and that

kept the bed dry. My people [those of the big household] slept in the grain bin. On Easter Sunday I hardly was able to say mass at the altar of Mary. Don Manuel Salazar y Jimenez says it was not the river which made his house crumble but the rains. I completed ten months of traveling on horse back. It was impossible to travel by buggy. [People] walked on the [adobe] walls.

Now before the fiestas I am putting a *pretil* (firewall) all around [the top of] my house. The dampness penetrated the walls because the house lacked *pretiles*. Not the church, for it had *pretiles*, but in the center where there was more earth [on the roof] it leaked more. I had to pay 30 dollars for breaking the acequia of Toribio and of Francisco Salazar and for the wheat of Catalina and Francisco Salazar 20 dollars. Daniel Lucero helped me with ten dollars. Even then Francisco Salazar threatened me with a suit. He saw [spoke to] E. Sanchez who wrote to me. But I sent Toribio to him and he informed [advised] him better and it seems that all is ended. It was Antonio Salazar who spoke to the lawyer.

I got five wagon loads of alfalfa from my fenced land. But I have a large amount of grass [hay] from the rinconada lands and from the swamps of Manuel and Julian Torres. But I think that much may be lost because of the rain today, November 4, 1905.

Many people attended the Fiesta. Daniel Lucero was the majordomo.

[This concludes Father Ralliere's notes for 1905. Some months later he took up his pen to complete the page]

May 10, 1906. I had to buy alfalfa [because of flood damage in 1905]. Some people gave me hay, among these Jesus Sanchez and José Torres. I bought corn. I plowed all of the Cerro land. My neighbors helped with more than twenty teams of horses. Now the land is sowed with wheat, alfalfa, oats. I plowed hills in the Rancho del Cerro land and sowed alfalfa with oats, also that portion of the vineyard which I dug up. [Now] the vineyard of grapes is fenced, a little smaller, but I mended 600 breaks. This makes a vineyard of 2100 vines. I made a dozen vats of wine. I sold 7 vats and the others I gave to the chair-men. I have drunk nothing.

This year already [spring] a part of the grapes have been frosted. Everyone has returned to Tavalopa.

[The second section of the *Apuntes*, penned in 1906, covers others of the old Tomé problems and intrigues, providing a close-up of late 19th century village life. It opens with an account of the most famous and disastrous of the Tomé floods, as Father Ralliere remembered it. This was]:

THE RIVER FLOOD, 1884 [written June 7, 1906]

The river broke forth at Chicál and in three days struck Tomé. We made a mistake. No "burro" was built east of the plaza. Don Juan Salazar y Jimenez, who commanded the people, knew that in 1828 the river broke in, [when] he was ten years of age, and he saw the "burro" which saved the plaza from the current. All he did was to send men to Cerro, so that the "burro" which these poor people were building was broken because he would not return to his work. On May 31 we all went to the hills in the Rinconada¹⁰ area where I stayed two months on a miserable ranch with Andres, Agapito, Juan Gomez, and Maria Jesus. I took all my things, not knowing if the house and church would be destroyed if the river should inundate all. Another day dawned, the day of Pentecost, I offered mass. I used the big church organ for an altar, and when I tried to speak to the few people who were in the room we all broke forth wailing. I made a boat in which I was able to navigate from the Constanca acequia to the door of my house. I had a red speckled stallion; we hitched him to the boat and with no work he would take us from one point to another, the distance of a mile. By boat it was possible to go around the square of the plaza, the way of the [church] procession. All the people went to the hills, camping under the cottonwoods. In those days there were only a few houses in Cerro. During the first days Mr. John Becker came to visit me and offered me ten sacks of flour which I distributed to the people. This taught me not to again accept management of provisions when they were arrived [were given]. Indeed I saw that I did not really know the people. Mr. John Becker saw me so sad and depressed that he invited

¹⁰. Sand hill area east of Tomé on edge of valley, somewhat higher than the town.

me to go to Belen. I went as far as Constanacia.¹¹ On seeing the river so high I was afraid to cross it. Mr. Becker pressed me to write to Belen merchants, or to [other] rich people. I did so on small cards which I handed to him. Lyns and Dankner sent something, but Don Felipe Chavez wrote me only a lot of free advice and sent not one pound of flour. Aid soon arrived from Bernalillo (Rev. Parisius), from Santa Fe (Rev. Defouri), from Las Vegas (Rev. Coudert). A part of the supplies arrived in Belen and these were brought across by Don Enrique [?] to his house and the rest arrived at Isleta Switch and I sent for them and left them at the house of Don Jesus Sanchez y Aragon, the Justice of the Peace [at Valencia]. The people were not content with the distribution. On the contrary there was even an article in an eastern newspaper saying that the priest of Tomé had kept the provisions for himself, signed by Thomas Harwood. I met the man on a train and I showed him a receipt for ten sacks of flour bought by myself from Alfonso Gingras, and another for 25 fanegas¹² of wheat which I bought from the Belen priest, proof that I had not been dependent upon the relief supplies. "Oh," said Harwood,— (it was not the old man but his son)— "It was your own people who have said this." It seems that Pablo Jaramillo composed a poem telling of the distribution of the relief supplies and he narrowly escaped a sound beating [from irate neighbors]. Pablo promised to send me a copy of that poem [but never did]. I am writing this on the 7th day of June, 1906.

I bought some beans for distribution; they were white beans. They arrived a little late. I did not collect the tithes. This was the end of the period for tithes and [customarily] produced a large part of the tithes. I do not lament my son's illness so much [Ralliere refers to the mean act of Pablo Jaramillo]; that which I lament is the evil habit which remains.— D. Francisco Manzanares sent one hundred dollars to J. G. Chaves for the poor, but when he saw the behavior of the people he returned that amount to Manzanares [he

11. Constanacia is a village a few miles south of Tomé, where Manuel A. Otero, wealthy and important in New Mexico politics, had his hacienda and flour mill.

12. A fanega is 125 pounds.

took it back]. But I sent to him saying that he might give the money to me for putting a [rough] wooden floor into the church [where there had been only a clay floor], and thus it was floored with the added help of D. Telesforo Jaramillo and my money. At that time I gave mass on Sundays in the chapel of the Sanchez family (one mass), and in the house of D. Clemente Chavés. The mass concerning rain [I gave] beneath a cottonwood near Rinconada. I have mentioned above that the people of Cerro were building a "burro" to prevent the waters from entering; finally, one windy day the water jumped the top of the "burro" and flooded as far as the wheat field of Crisolojo Aragon, and threatened my own vineyard. It was Saturday evening. I sent to ask for help from all who lived in the foothills. I had to [go to] offer mass in the Sanchez chapel. When I returned I found many workmen building a "burro" and making a cut, and in the evening they were still working. I ordered all the tortillas in the houses, with coffee, to be collected to give strength to the workers, and this they were able to finish and the river did not come in below. They said that Crisolojo had blasphemed [because the cut made to drain the waters had ruined his field]. He told me it was not so. The fact is that a little later he jumped in to bath in a pool behind the Cerro and he did not come out, and they could not get his body until another day, with great effort. [Some villagers believed this an act of supernatural justice.] On that day I had a visit from the Frenchman [Emile] Dubois and from Father Martin of La Jolla. Another visitor whom I received various times at the Rinconada was Father Benavides from Manzano.

The river destroyed the channels behind the Cerro [to the north], made a marsh of 22 feet deep. We cut another irrigation ditch to the east as far as the lands of Francisco Orona. In other years we abandoned the acequia to the west which we had dug in 1865 as far as the ranch of Mariano Vigil until we joined the acequia of Bernardino Cedillo — which we had abandoned in favor of one which connected with that of Constanancia and in the end we joined that of Bernardino, with check [box] by the Chaves [ranch] and intake at Isleta — the Acequia which runs the mill of the Romeros.

HISTORY OF "THE BATTLE OF THE CHARCOS," MARCH 1877

When Father Luis Benavides took my place in 1869-70 [while Father Ralliere made a trip to Rome] he baptised Tomé with the name of "Charcos City" [the city of stagnant pools]. There was one putrid lake to the south of the house of Don Romulo Salazar and another smaller one at the north of the house of Francisco Salazar. In 1877 I decided to fill these pools by means of [deposition of] the silt carried in the water of my drainage ditch. When Francisco Salazar sold his house to Manuel Salazar y Baca, the latter gave me permission to drain my muddy water into the pool, which Francisco never had wanted to permit, and soon with the dissolved mud the little putrid lake was [filled and] dried. For the other it was more difficult. I requested a people's meeting from the Judge, Laureano Jaramillo, which was held March 8 in a house later destroyed by the river and now rebuilt by Daniel Lucero in 1906. I had no more than spoken of putting the drainage of my ditch into the stagnant ponds when Don Juan Salazar halted it and made a "Speech" to the people, saying: We were created in the pools, if we are pulled into the high lands we will die — they would get rid of my lands. We had to dig a trench to the arroyos to drain off the putrid water of the stagnant ponds and the water of the ditch but he said that if they dug a trench from the hills by means of it the river would enter. The town was working for [had been coached by] Don Juan Salazar and applauded all this great nonsense. Laureano took the floor and said: I know well why Don Juan does not want us to dig a ditch; it is because he has across his place a "burro" so that he can use the drainage of the priest's ditch to irrigate his pasture land. "Lies," said Don Juan and they would have gone into a fist fight if they had not been separated. "Let us go," said Don Juan then and all got ready to go. I said to them: "You are a group of ill-bred people, you are in a meeting and neither the judge nor the president has dismissed you." "An apology," said Don Juan, but with all the people and the apology they left and only a half dozen men remained. "Well, thus it is," said Don Manuel A. Otero who was the president of the meeting (the

meeting was held on a porch). "Thus it is and there is nothing we can do." "Why not?" I then said, "Now we can do better. Do you want to? Do you want to?" I spoke, directing my words to those who remained present: Don Manuel A. Otero, Don Romulo Salazar, Jose Jaramillo, Laureano, Jose Baca, Antonio Salazar. "Yes, yes." "In that case, now we will have our own meeting in the room [inside the house]. There we determined to dig the trench on the 14th of March, 1877. They named workers to go to cut through the "burro" of Don Juan Salazar so that the water could escape and the land become dry.

And thus it was done. I also went to see the dyke cut, but for my own motive, not to watch.

On another day Don Juan Salazar came to my room and asked me: "Who has cut my acequia?"

I answered him, "I have."

He called the acequia his because he had built a ridge to make it appear that he took the water from the arroyo, which of course was not possible.

"Are you not going to repair it?" he said to me.

"No."

"There will be dead people here," [he threatened.] He carried in his hand a live-oak club.

"Then kill me at once."

But perhaps he did not want to, as he threw his club on the floor.

"You obstructed my drainway with your acequia."

"Your acequia never had a drainway."

"I am surprised that you say this now. At one time you defended this drainage ditch."

And he said to me: "It is not the first time that I have suffered from your unjust things. There are two points which you will have to explain in another place." And with this he left.

I went into the church and wept to see that a thing so simple and so beneficial had caused such a great revolution in all the town.

Later I went to tell all to Don Romulo Salazar and Antonio. Don Romulo saw me in such affliction that he resolved to study some plan to remedy everything. He went out to

look for Don Juan on his land and although angry with him he begged an interview at once. He said to him something like this: "Why do you fight, compadre, with the priest?"

"Oh, I do not want to fight. Well, let us see if the priest will install a water-passageway for my acequia."

"Then let us go to the house of the priest."

I agreed to putting in the water-passage and all was finished!

— It was on a Friday in Lent; after the stations of the Cross we hitched up a wagon and we went, I, Don Romulo, Don Antonio, and Jose Jaramillo to Constancia to relate everything to Don Manuel Antonio Otero. He said: "How well you did in coming here at once. After I came home from the meeting, my courage [anger] boiled," and he showed us a gun which he carried in his pocket. And he had ordered his clerk, [in his store] Alfonso Gingras, to keep an axe handle upon the counter to deal a blow at the "nutshell" of the first who should say anything.

With all this two years passed without my visiting the house of Don Juan Salazar because he had not explained his words to me — "It is not the first time that I have suffered from you in unjust matters." Don Romulo brought us together and Don Juan said "One in anger says many things which one can not prove."

Now it was Lent. All the people of Tomé had been behaving badly. They did not go to confession because of anger or shame. I wrote to Father Baldassare S. J., to come and confess my rebels. He came with Father Afranchino S. J. While there they helped me with the fiesta of Saint Joseph, March 19. They stayed ten days in Tomé hearing confessions (500 went to confession). All is well that ends well.

Before this, on the 14th of March, the drainage canal was dug to the arroyas. There were sixty volunteer workers who came. It carried the muddy water and in a few years, without [ill] feeling, the lake was filled with silt.

DIFFICULTY WITH DON JOSÉ JARAMILLO

In the year 1869 José Baca traded me a piece of land in the lake area of Rinconada for a piece of land on the other

side of the road to the west of my fenced land. And this fellow gave to Jose Jaramillo this same land [in exchange] for another to the west of the acequia. The land which he transferred to Jose Jaramillo was traversed by my drainage ditch and by "burros"—dykes—. In January of 1871 Jose Jaramillo began to close [fill] the ditch pretending that I had sold it because I had not listed exception or reservation in the sale. I could not make him understand that the acequia was a property separate from the land. He assured me that I really had sold it to him and proved it because [on the basis of] Macho, my mayordomo, abandoned [ceased using] the Tomé acequia in 1870. It was abandoned because he wanted to, because the Tomé acequia was dirty and clogged. Moreover, I was not here that year; I was on the trip to Rome. And Nacho [nickname for Ignacio; also used in address, as one might use "Bud"] decided it would be well to dig an acequia from the Arroyo where later Francisco Salazar dug an acequia to enter the acequia of San Fernando. I went to see a lawyer, Bonifacio Chavez. He counceled me to again forbid Don Juan Salazar [from filling the acequia]. This I did. But it was useless. I went to Don Juan Salazar to convince him but could obtain nothing but insults from him. He made me waste my money in court for something so clear. One day while entering the church for mass I thought of seeing Don Manuel Antonio Otero. I told my sacristan, Estevan Zamora, that he should speak to this gentleman and request that he come with him. Being informed of the question by Don Juan Salazar, he did everything possible to make Jose Jaramillo drop his idea, but it was useless. Then Don Manuel Antonio Otero stood up in anger and said: "Well, let us fight, and the padre shall not fight alone, understand that the lands which are irrigated by these acequias belong to the church. And we have to defend the property of the church, I and all the town."

"Oh, I will not fight with so many," said Jose Jaramillo, and the problem was ended.

But the feeling remained with me and on Feb. 1871 when his daughter Marieta married Jose Baca, and Jose Baca, the elder, and Jose Jaramillo came to invite me to the feast I did not want to go.

June 21, 1906

SUIT WITH DON MANUEL ANTONIO OTERO
CONCERNING THE ABUNDANT WATER OF PERALTA

In the year 1877 began my difficulty, which was not mine alone but that of many who relied on the excess water [drainage] from Peralta to irrigate their farms. In the year 1869 Manuel A. Otero started a mill and his house in La Bolsa, which he named Constancia. He prevented us from [taking water for] irrigating so that his mill would grind. He had his people who worked the acequia all the way from La Constancia to Cerro, clear to the mill. Among these was Don Clemente Chaves and his son Guillermo. In 1877 I wrote him a letter intended to make him see the injustice of his procedure. Here began the displeasure. I find in my papers that in December of 1877 he did not want to pay his tithe [to the church] but then he suffered the attack [of illness] and the next day he sent the tithe. On February 14, 1877 his wife had died, Doña Dolores Chaves, sister of Don Felipe Chaves. Her body was brought here from Washington. Don Manuel had little time to live. He died March 1, 1882. His son Manuel B. Otero was killed in Estancia by a bullet which cut the vein in his neck the 19th of August 1883.¹³

In 1879 Manuel A. brought charges against Ponciano Otero, José Luna, Romulo Romero because they had taken *his* water. Against me he did not bring charges. They went to see Col. Francisco Chaves¹⁴ so that he might defend them. I too [went along] and more I offered to pay all the costs of the suit, confident that my friend Col. Chaves would defend us without charging me because he liked doing some harm to his brother-in-law Manuel A., whom he despised. I have a letter from Antonio Jose Luna dated March 15, 1879, inviting us to an interview in his house so that I and Manuel A. might settle things. I said to him: "Let us work [the acequia] and we shall have water for irrigation and for milling." "No, for this water is mine." And in effect he had bought the water from the mill of his brother Antonio José Otero; he had

13. See previous paper by F. Ellis in *New Mexico Historical Review*, vol. 30 (1955).

14. Famed New Mexico lawyer and legislator, resident of Peralta. His commission came from the U. S. Army.

[also] paid for the water of the other acequias of Peralta and Valencia.

Important letter. Father Paulet¹⁵ came to me in December 1877, very frightened. He had been in his house in Belen with Dr. Ross when a man opened the door and threw in a letter. No one knew who the man was. The letter was written and signed by Manuel A. Otero and read thus: Rev. Father Gasparri, Socorro (he was there preaching a mission). As I have put all my confidence in you I beg that on your return trip from Socorro, you will stop at my house for me to tell you of a very delicate matter concerning Father Ralliere.

We were not able to explain how this letter came to be written. I saw Father Gasparri in Los Lunas on his return from Socorro and he told me that he had not received such a letter. That same day I was with Don José Abran and I spoke to him about the letter in secret, but in reality so that he would go to tell his brother Manuel A. This same afternoon Manuel A. came to a baptism and after the baptism I told him that Father Gasparri had sent word that if he had anything to say against Father Ralliere he should say it to the Bishop; Manuel A. wanted to prosecute those who had opened his letter but he could not find where they were. Father Paulet and Dr. Ross had determined to burn the letter. At that time I had my suspicion but I was very careful not to discuss the matter. What I believe is that Father Benito Bernal by error opened the letter and seeing that it concerned me wanted to do me a service by giving me word in this manner. The letter had the date of December 1, 1877.

In the spring of 1879 Manuel B. Otero married Eloisa Luna. I went to the wedding and made a speech at the supper. As I took leave Don Benito Baca [son-in-law of Manuel A. Otero] took my hand and said to me: "Thanks for your speech." Father Gasparri also had made a speech in the church and he received no such thanks. Earlier when Father Gasparri asked who would prepare for publication an account of the wedding Benito Baca said to him dryly: "I will do it." But Benito who had suffered much fatigue uselessly trying to

15. Parish priest of Belen for thirty years. He was one of the group of religious brought from Europe to New Mexico in 1854.

be named a candidate in the Democratic party became ill in La Constancia, died, and was buried the day of June 23, 1879 in the cemetery of Tomé in a monument of stone.

Before this as I had made no settlement with Manuel A. Otero on the purchase of a plot for the grave of his wife, Dolores Chaves (ten feet by twenty) I wrote him [urging] that he donate a bell to the parish of Tomé. He answered me without date (it was in the year 1877) : The history of Manzano (Manuel A. was the one who gave the people of Manzano the bell which they have at present) and many other stories of no great distance are sufficient proof to me that I should not throw away my money by ringing into the wind. Upon my heart I feel that I can not do for this parish that which I have desired. (Do not say that I have blemished it.)

He was angry over the prospect of the suit concerning the acequia. The battle was started by Doroteo Chavez removing the check dam on the Cerro acequia August 4, 1879. Father Paulet came to see me during this month proposing a settlement. I did not want to deprecate his good services and so I proposed that he should talk to Don Clemente Chaves. He wrote him a letter asking him to come to my house. . . .

[Here a page is missing from the *Apuntes*. Evidently the problem of payment for graves and the suit concerning water use, both involving the powerful Otero family, became so hot that Father Guerin¹⁶ wrote the archbishop asking that he settle the matter. The letter making this request later came into the hands of Father Ralliere, who copied it. Its concluding paragraphs appear at the top of the next page of his notes] :

. . . dollars (For 130, padrecito) for the burial of Benito Baca. This I think is enough to let rest in quietude the bones of this lamented young man. They talk in Las Vegas of going to dig up this body and taking it to their area in order to close this sad question. Your bishopric has all

16. Rev. John Guerin came to New Mexico on Lamy's trip for missionary aids, 1854, as a young deacon and was ordained priest in Santa Fe on Dec. 23rd of that year. He was parish priest of Mora when he died in 1885. Salpointe, *Op. cit.*, p. 207. The location of Father Guerin in Mora, whence came the letter, and Ralliere's statements in his paragraphs following this letter made the authorship quite certain, even though no signature is recorded on the portion preserved in these notes.

the authority to stop this business, sustained by the most mortal enemy of the church, the famous Francisco Chavés. A single word from your bishopric does away with these quarrels. I am of the opinion that the quicker your voice is heard the better.

Mora, Dec. 28, 1879.

[Benito Baca came from a prominent Las Vegas family and the contention over what should be paid the church after the funeral by the wealthy family into which he had married was not understood by his old friends to cover recompense to the church for the grave of Manuel A's first wife, as well. For bells, floors, etc. to go into the various churches he served, Father Ralliere was dependent upon the contributions and payments of the more wealthy parishioners. He put the major portion of his own funds into the church and community improvements, including the school he built and taught in Tomé and for which he also provided other teachers so that everything from English to instrumental music could be offered. The matter of opposing the Otero family over water rights — in which the priest felt he was acting on the side of absolute right and for those of his parishioners who were being deprived by the powerful family — openly affected the previous friendly relationship between Manuel A. and Ralliere, and hence — the priest felt — their generosity regarding funeral payments to the church. Father Ralliere boiled not only at the rebuke indicated for his own actions but also because his friend Francisco Chaves (whom the letter-writer did not realize was generally opposed to his brother-in-law, Manuel A) was pointed out to the archbishop as a "mortal enemy of the church." Moreover, the forthright Ralliere obviously felt that Guerin had been hypocritical. Still seething when he wrote his notes thirty-one years later, he set down several paragraphs on this matter]

The mortal enemy. Father Guerin was at my fiestas of Sept. 8 once when Archbishop Lamy and Col. Chaves were here. I began the speeches, saying: Señor Archbishop, Col. Chaves has done me various services, [and in return] I have promised to pardon one half his sins. His excellency [the archbishop] will see if the other half may be forgiven. From

here on Col. Chaves proclaimed himself a Catholic and Father Guerin made friendly gestures to Col. Chaves. Afterward they wrote to each other as good friends.

I had in Santa Fe two good friends, Father Truchard,¹⁷ vicar, and Father Francolon.¹⁸ Father Truchard gave us his picture in 1897 and he was pleased when all the clergy felicitated him and was complimented when I pleaded with him not to leave. He wanted to go because the parish of Santa Fe had been taken away from him. I have various letters from him which prove the interest he had in me. I have a letter of four pages of large paper from Father Francolon, showing the same interest. He was the one who kept safe for me the letter of Father Guerin and later gave it to me in Santa Cruz. I think the counsels of Father Guerin were of little value, and later how the Archbishop went over the dispute of the acequia when I was not alone in it, as if they were not many [!]

Moreover, Girdsleeve [who, with Col. Chaves, were the two lawyers representing Ralliere and the people he was aiding in this case] went to see the Archbishop and made the same thing clear to him and further told him that he was certain of winning, that if he did not win this case he would not follow law longer. Moreover, at this time poor Lamy was dead [cast down with unhappiness]. His nephew, John Baptist,¹⁹ had killed Mallet with a bullet from the back.

I came home from the court on Sunday evening. My singers [choir] gathered and some other persons playing the

17. Agustin Truchard had come from France with Ralliere and received the priesthood with him in Santa Fe, 1856. He left New Mexico to return to France—according to Salpointe (*op. cit.* p. 208)—because of ill health. In 1868 as parish priest of Albuquerque, he "called the Sisters of Loretto to open a school in that town. He had built a large house for the purpose, and the school prospered until 1869, when it was closed owing to a change of the ecclesiastical administration in the parish." *Op. cit.*, p. 249.

18. Lt. John G. Bourke ("*Bourke on the Southwest*," Ed., Lansing Bloom, New Mexico Hist. Rev., vol. 11, no. 3 [1936], pp. 249-52) tells of meeting Father J. B. Francolon at Santa Cruz, July 1881, where the latter was stationed. Bourke was impressed with the intelligence of the French priest, with his collection of fine San Ildefonso pottery, and with his appreciation of a fine "copy of some Spanish master" depicting the Madonna and Child, for which Francolon had refused the standing offer of \$500 from the President of the Denver and Rio Grande railroad.

19. Mallet, a French architect in Santa Fe had been pursuing the wife of Lamy's nephew while the latter was out of town on business trips. Upon returning from one such trip, he discovered the situation and shot Mallet. He was exonerated on the basis of self defense.

violin in my house and in the plaza. We set off a firecracker. I gave them a glass of wine and José Abran spread the story that we were all drunk. May God forgive me, but I was content to make the man mad.

Jointly with the acequia case came the trouble over the making of the graves.

Truchard wrote me that I made a blunder in not arranging the act and manner of making the graves. I said that Manuel A. [Otero] did not want to donate a bell in settlement for the grave of Doña Dolores [his first wife].

For the grave of Benito he gave nothing. Eleuterio Baca [and] Emilio Otero wrote me that all was paid with the 130 dollars which they gave me for the funeral. Father Truchard wrote me on Oct. 11, 1879 that Manuel A. had published an article against me in the Las Vegas Gazette. The New Mexican [newspaper] of Santa Fe took up my defense. This article did much good for me, because it placed the Archbishop in my favor. Manuel Antonio continued going to Santa Fe to give bad reports against me. When I could see that a tempest was brewing I persuaded the Archbishop to send here a vicar for good [first-hand] information. And in effect Father Truchard came the 30th of April, 1880. He gave the mass on Sunday and I told everyone who came to mass that here was the vicar to obtain information concerning me. Various ones entered the room of Father Truchard, among them Don Jose Baca and Manuel B. Otero [son of Manuel A.] but to defend me. I prepared a wagon with driver for Father Truchard to go to La Constancia [home of Manuel A.] Manuel A. spoke to him about a letter I had written him to persuade him to arrange a reconciliation between José Abran Romero and Sofia. I had already shown my letter to Father Truchard. On his return he told me to give him [Manuel A.] a satisfactory explanation, but the next day, when he was about to leave, Father Truchard received a letter from Manuel A. which he did not at all like and he told me not to write Manuel A. I have yet to say that I, with more malice than convenient, buried Sabino Montaña, Feb. 13, 1880 next to [the grave of] Benito. Later Catalina Contreras. [These were persons of poor families. Ralliere was hitting back.]

— Father Truchard by order of the Archbishop ordered me to remove the bodies. I did not do it. The town of Tomé and the Contreras family would have made a revolution. Eleuterio Baca and Emilio Otero tried to take the body of Benito to Las Vegas but that never did happen and now I see that this body is indeed forgotten, the same as that of the family of Manuel A.

In the end Archbishop Lamy ordered me not to give burial to anyone in the monument of Manuel A. without notifying him. This man [Manuel A.] died March 1, 1882. All responsibility was taken by D. Miguel and Meliton Otero and after some menacing words Manuel B. did pay me two hundred dollars for the burial of his father. Manuel A. had given the church a candelabra which at factory prices cost 75 dollars. It [cash plus candelabra] was very near the 300 dollars which I claimed.

Five months before his death Manuel A. married Cruz Chaves, Sept. 24, 1881. From this time dates the perfect reconciliation of Manuel A. with me. He came to see me for the wedding. He came with Don Juan Salazar y Jimenez and he . . .

[Here a page or more is missing, but village recollections provide the remainder of the tale of the Otero graves. Cruz Otero attempted to have a crypt opened in the gravestone above the three Otero graves at the death of her infant son, since Archbishop Lamy decreed that three bodies sufficiently filled the plot and no more should be added. But the two men whom she hired to cut the hole into the stone gave up after three days, the only result of their efforts being a shallow ill-shaped pit which Ralliere ordered re-sealed. Burial of the child Manuel A. Jr., was made in an iron-fenced grave in front of the church.

Later Cruz married Julian Chavez from Valencia. Upon his death, she again commissioned two men to open a grave in the Otero stone, but, this being prevented by the church, the old man was buried in the cemetery of the Tomé Grant.]

(To be continued)