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Fray Angelico Chavez

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THE FIRST SANTA FE FIESTA COUNCIL, 1712

By FRAY ANGELICO CHAVEZ

IT WAS a wet and stormy day in September, 1712, when several citizens of Santa Fe joined the City Council in a special meeting to formulate plans for a perennial fiesta in commemoration of General DeVargas' first Reconquest of the ancient Capital. But let the original minutes and ordinances¹ speak for themselves in the quaint rambling phraseology of those times:

In the Villa of Santa Fe, on the sixteenth day of the month of September of the year seventeen hundred and twelve, gathered and met together in the house of residence of the General, Juan Paez Hurtado, Lieutenant Governor and Captain General,

because the official meeting houses were unfit as a result of the continuous rains that have fallen since the thirteenth day of the present month, as also the lightning storms not seen before [*at this time of year*],

the purpose being that, recalling how this Villa had been conquered on the Fourteenth day of September of the past year of sixteen hundred and ninety-two² by the General Don Diego de Vargas Zapata Lujan Ponce de Leon, Marquis of La Nava de Brazinas,

and that in twenty years no fiesta had been observed, as this Villa should have, in honor of the Salutary Rood of Our Redemption,

and so that in the future the said fourteenth day be celebrated, with Vespers, Mass, sermon, and procession through the Main Plaza,

all the gentlemen of the Illustrious City Council, Justice and Magistracy, remaining bound to its observance by this writ, through the solemn oath which those of the Present [*Council*] made at the hands of the Reverend Father Guardian of said Villa, Fray Antonio Camargo,

whom said Illustrious City Council had invited to graciously attend said meeting with the rest of the citizens of the Villa, [*especially*] those who have received decorations, and former council members,

1. R. E. Twitchell, *Spanish Archives of New Mexico*, II, no. 179. Keeping the old sentence structure, I have broken up the page-long sentences into paragraphs.

2. This was DeVargas' first Entry with troops only; the ceremonies are minutely described by him. See J. M. Espinosa, *First Expedition of Vargas into New Mexico, 1692*, pp. 95-7.

being that a formal invitation had already been presented by the Captain, Alfonso Rael de Aguilar, Magistrate Ordinary, and the Adjutant and Regent, Salvador Montoya, to the Lord Marquis of la Peñuela, Governor and Captain General of this Kingdom, in order that his Lordship might assist at said meeting as President,

who [*in turn*] gave an order to the aforesaid his Lieutenant General to preside over it, who in compliance with it thus carried it out.

And said Fiesta, since the Fourteenth Day was past, which is the one designated for future years, we determined to celebrate on the Seventeenth Day, which is the one in which the Church Our Mother celebrates the Bleeding Wounds of the Lord St. Francis,³

in whose Church⁴ it is our will that it be celebrated for all time, a Fiesta in honor of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

And we oblige, in the manner with which we are empowered, all those who should succeed us in said Illustrious City Council,

in whose charge will be the burden of collecting the contributions, as well as assigning the sermon to the Person whom it should please, who will be given twenty-five *pesos*;

and of the rest that should be collected thirty *pesos* will be paid out for the Vespers, Mass, and Procession,

which is what we the Present ones bind ourselves to, and we bind those who should succeed us, as we likewise oblige ourselves to furnish the beeswax that should be needed,

and if, perhaps, with the passing of time this Villa should have some of its own funds, a portion of them will be designated for said festivity, which, as we have finished saying, we swear in due form of law;

I, the General, Juan Paez Hurtado, President in the place of said Lord Marquis of la Peñuela—the Captain, Alfonso Rael de Aguilar, Magistrate Ordinary—the Captain, Don Felix Martinez, Regent—the Adjutant, Salvador Montoya, Regent—Miguel de Dios Sandoval Martinez, Secretary of the Council—the Field Commander, Lorenzo Madrid, Council

3. The "Stigmata" or Wounds of Christ Crucified which St. Francis of Assisi received towards the end of his life, and commemorated on September 17. (*Roman Missal and Breviary*.)

4. The church of St. Francis serving as parish church at this time was a small structure outside the north wall, erected sometime after DeVargas' second Entry in 1693. *Sp. Arch.*, I, no. 758; II, no. 94a; NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW, Vol. 24, p. 90. The permanent church of St. Francis, on the site of the present Cathedral, was then in construction, and was ready for use in 1714. *Ibid.*, p. 89; "Our Lady of the Conquest," *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, pp. 39, 74-5.

Member—the Captain, Antonio Montoya, Council Member—
—the Captain, Juan Garcia de la Riva, Council Member—
the Captain, Francisco Lorenzo de Casados, Council Mem-
ber—

And we declare that the beeswax which is [*left over after being*] burned in said festivity shall be gathered up by said Illustrious Council, or the person it should assign for the purpose, and this we do because of the scarcity in this land, and all together we bind ourselves to assist at Vespers, Mass, Sermon, and Procession, and we swear to the Most Holy Cross for its [*being*] Patron [*i.e. Title*]⁵ of this Villa of Santa Fe.

And we sign this writing and obligation on said day, month, and year.

(*Here follow the signatures of the nine men sworn.*)

As plainly stated in the document, the occasion these people wished to commemorate was, not the general pacification of the Pueblos of New Mexico by DeVargas in 1692, but his triumphal entry, *Entrada*, into Santa Fe itself, with the attendant ceremonies which DeVargas himself colorfully described in his Journal. In short, it was a strictly local enterprise, a Santa Fe Fiesta. DeVargas had made a similar entry into Santa Fe the following year, in December, and this time with the colonists; similar ceremonies had taken place, but this time after a crucial battle for the city. Perhaps these soldiers wished to ignore this second and more important *Entrada*, or they automatically included it with the first, since the weather in December would be too severe for a Fiesta. At any rate, September 14, titular feast of the Military Garrison, was to be the day. Now to the persons who conceived the idea of the Fiesta.

Principals of First Fiesta Council

The principals in the Fiesta document, not all those present at the meeting are mentioned, are the Lieutenant Governor, the City Council members, and other major offi-

5. "The Most Holy Cross" was the name and title of the Spanish Presidio in Santa Fe from 1693 until the end of the Spanish regime. Here the City Council, almost all military, considered it also as the city's ecclesiastical title. After the erection of the parish church, 1714-17, however, St. Francis was the city's official Patron while the garrison continued under the title of the Holy Cross.

cials. Only three, the Montoyas and Madrid, are old New Mexicans. The rest are newcomers, soldiers or colonists recruited by DeVargas for the Reconquest. It is interesting to note their different origins as well as the interrelations that had taken place through marriage since 1693.

JUAN PAEZ HURTADO, Lieutenant Governor, and representing the Marquis Governor, was a native of Villafranca de los Palacios, near Las Cabezas in Andalucía. He was the son of Domingo Hurtado and Ana Rubio y Vásquez, both deceased.⁶ Before or after coming to the New World he was recruited for the Reconquest of New Mexico by DeVargas, who appointed him the leader of military recruits. In 1692 Paez Hurtado brought up reinforcements from Parral.⁷ He also recruited new colonists in Zacatecas.⁸ All through DeVargas' two terms of governorship, he was his Lieutenant Governor and right-hand man, as well as commander of many of his Indian Campaigns. He was also the executor of DeVargas' last will in 1704,⁹ and for a time was interim Governor.

Paez Hurtado's first wife was a Pascuala Lopez de Vera, who died in 1693, shortly before the colonists set out for New Mexico.¹⁰ He brought along a little daughter, Ana, whom she had borne him, and this girl married a Pedro Ortiz Escudero in Santa Fe, Jan. 6, 1716.¹¹ He himself married Teodora de la Riva, or de la Rivas, daughter of Captain Miguel Garcia de la Riva and Micaela Velasco, all three natives of the City of Mexico. The wedding took place on June 20, 1704.¹² He and Teodora had three children: Antonia, who became the wife of Jose Terrus;¹³ Gertrudis, who married Nicolas Ortiz III;¹⁴ and Juan Domingo, mentioned in the last will of Jose Terrus.

6. Archdiocese of Santa Fe, *Informaciones Matrimoniales*, 1704, no. 6.

7. Espinosa, *op. cit.*, pp. 55, 116.

8. *Sp. Arch.*, I, no. 402; Bancroft Collection (Berkeley), *New Mexico Originals*; NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW, Vol. 25, p. 248.

9. *Sp. Arch.*, I, nos. 99, 1027.

10. *Inf. Matrim.*, 1704, no. 6.

11. *Ibid.*, 1715, no. 8.

12. *Ibid.*, 1704, no. 6.

13. Terrus Will in *Sp. Arch.*, I, no. 966.

14. Cf. "Ramon Ortiz, etc.," NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW, Vol. 25, notes, pp. 265-8.

Juan Paez Hurtado died in 1742, and was buried on May 5 under the altar of *La Conquistadora*, of whose Confraternity he was a devoted head;¹⁵ his bones should lie under the altar against the north wall of the north chapel of the Santa Fe Cathedral. His second wife, Doña Teodora Garcia, had died six years before and was buried in the sanctuary of the same chapel, Nov. 17, 1736.¹⁶

To all appearances, Paez Hurtado was the originator and prime mover of this idea of a Fiesta in honor of DeVargas' Reconquest of Santa Fe, for the great Reconquistador had not only been his hero, but also his close friend, patron, and benefactor. A Spanish Governor of New Mexico was not inclined by nature and custom to commemorate the achievements of predecessors, especially close ones, and so the Marquis of la Peñuela, Don José Chacón Medina Salazar y Villaseñor, Governor in 1712, absented himself from a meeting which he apparently considered of little moment. Ironically, he gets the credit for the ordinance creating the Fiesta.¹⁷

DON FELIX MARTINEZ was one of the hundred soldiers recruited by DeVargas in Spain. He was a native of Galicia. After formally signing up in April, 1693, he took part in the Reconquest of that year, not in the *Entrada* of 1692. In 1695 he commanded the Presidio at Guadalupe del Paso.¹⁸ Martinez succeeded Mogollon as Governor of New Mexico in 1716, but soon after was ordered by the Viceroy to return to the City of Mexico.¹⁹ The exact year of his return is not definitely established, but he did not come back to New Mexico, nor did he leave any descendants. His title of Don, not shared by the rest of the Council, even the Lieutenant Governor himself, showed that he belonged at least to the lesser nobility.

He, too, had reasons for perpetuating the memory and glories of DeVargas, for with Paez Hurtado he owed everything to him.²⁰

15. "Our Lady of the Conquest," *ibid.*, Vol. 23, pp. 41, 66-7.

16. *Ibid.*

17. NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW, Vol. 6, p. 323.

18. Archivo General de Indias, *Mexico, Audiencia*, legajo 377.

19. NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW, Vol. 6, p. 158.

20. *Ibid.*, Vol. 14, p. 411.

ALFONSO RAEI DE AGUILAR was born in the City of Lorca near the southeast coast of Spain.²¹ He had reached Guadalupe del Paso as early as 1683, for there on October 24 of that year he married a New Mexican, Josefa Garcia de Noriega.²² Josefa (Ana) Garcia was the daughter of Alonso Garcia de Noriega and Teresa Varela.²³ Alfonso's name appears often in documents of his day, either as notary, secretary of war, or an actor in the events described.

His children were: Alonso II, who married Tomasa Montoya, most likely a daughter of the Antonio Montoya in the Council, and later Melchora de Sandoval, daughter of Miguel de Dios Sandoval Martinez, also present at the Fiesta meeting; also, Eusebio, Juan, Antonia, Francisca, and Felicitana.²⁴ The latter eventually became the wife of Juan Garcia de la Riva, present in the Council.

Alfonso Rael de Aguilar was buried in the Conquistadora chapel on April 10, 1734, and his wife followed him on August 12 of the same year.²⁵

SALVADOR MONTOYA, born in New Mexico, was the son of Diego Montoya and Josefa de Hinojos, who had escaped with their family when the Indians rebelled in 1680.²⁶ On April 25, 1700, he married Manuela Garcia in Bernalillo; she was a sister of Juan Garcia de la Riva, present at the Council meeting. They had the following children: Jose Francisco, who went to live in Nueva Vizcaya; Miguel, who married Rosa Baca; Jose Manuel; Francisca, and Josefa.²⁷

ANTONIO MONTOYA was also a native New Mexican who escaped the 1680 massacre with his wife and children. His wife, Maria Hurtado, was a first cousin of Rael de Aguilar's first wife.²⁸ Antonio died sometime before his wife; she made her will in 1725 and was buried on March 22, 1726, in

21. AGN, *Mexico, Inquisición*, t. 735, f. 280.

22. First Marriage Book of El Paso del Norte, Bandelier Notes.

23. Deduced from New Mexico Family charts.

24. *Sp. Arch.*, I, no. 765.

25. "Our Lady of the Conquest," *op. cit.*, pp. 40-1.

26. *Sp. Arch.*, I, no. 512.

27. Baptisms-13, Bernalillo, Marriage Section; *Sp. Arch.*, *loc. cit.*

28. *Sp. Arch.*, II, no. 35.

the Conquistadora chapel.²⁹ Ten children are mentioned in the will: Juan Antonio, Andres, Angela, Juana, Antonia, Nicolasa, Antonio, Manuela, Tomasa, and Maria.³⁰

MIGUEL DE DIOS SANDOVAL MARTINEZ came to New Mexico in 1694 with his parents, the only son of Juan de Dios Sandoval Martinez and Juana de Medina. He was eighteen at the time, and all were natives of the City of Mexico.³¹ From his last will, Nov. 26, 1755, we learn that his mother's name was also "de Hernandez," and that his wife was Lucia Gómez, to whom he had been married fifty-eight years and two months. They had eight children, who dropped the "Martinez" and perpetuated the name "Sandoval." These were: Manuela, Juana, Melchora, Andres, Antonio, Juan Manuel, Miguel, and Felipe.³² Of these, Melchora became the second wife of Alfonso Rael de Aguilar, while Juan Manuel married Josefa Rael de Aguilar.

LORENZO MADRID, the son of Francisco Madrid II and elder brother of Roque Madrid, boasted in 1697 that he was the oldest Conquistador and settler living in the Kingdom.³³ At Guadalupe del Paso, when the 1680 Indian Rebellion broke out, he passed muster there, and was described as a native of New Mexico, married, forty-seven years old, tall and swarthy, with black hair and beard. He was also lame in one arm.³⁴ According to his last will, he had had a wife before the Rebellion by the name of Antonia Ortiz [Baca], who bore him these sons: Nicolás, José, Simon, and Francisco Tomás Simon.³⁵ Of these, José seemed to be the only one living in 1680. His second wife, the one with him in 1680, was Ana de Anaya Almazan, widow of Andres Lopez Sambrano, by whom he had no children; however, they had adopted six orphans, the eldest of whom might be the Lucia

29. "Our Lady of the Conquest," *op. cit.*, p. 40.

30. *Sp. Arch.*, I, no. 405.

31. Biblioteca Nacional, Mexico, leg. 4, pt. 1, pp. 790-5.

32. *Sp. Arch.*, I, no. 855.

33. *Inf. Matrim.*, 1697, no. 17b.

34. C. W. Hackett, *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians*, I, pp. 35, 143; II, pp. 66, 129.

35. *Sp. Arch.*, I, no. 502.

Madrid, captured by Indians in 1680, who was rescued by her "brother" José in 1692.³⁶

JUAN GARCIA DE LA RIVA was the son of Miguel Garcia de la Riva and Micaela Velasco, who brought their family from the City of Mexico in 1694.³⁷ Of their six children, Teodora married Juan Paez Hurtado, Juan married Felicitana Rael de Aguilar, and Maria Manuela was the wife of Salvador Montoya. This family was certainly well represented in the Fiesta Council.

FRANCISCO LORENZO DE CASADOS, a native of Cadiz, had known Juan Paez Hurtado in Spain, and so testified at the latter's wedding.³⁸ The name of his wife is not known, nor is there any kinship to be found with other members of the Council. He had one son, Francisco José, who later married Maria de Archibeque.³⁹

The Santa Fe Fiesta

No one knows for how long the decree of the first Fiesta Council was carried out. The Fiesta might have been observed only in that year of 1712, if the rains allowed any external festivities, or the tradition then founded might have been kept up for many years afterward. For this there is no documentary evidence at all, though we might presume that the Fiesta did last as long as Juan Paez Hurtado was alive.

The present Santa Fe Fiesta, which this year will advertise itself as the 241st, dates from the period around the First World War, when public-minded citizens, "Anglos" who appreciated the unique Spanish historical background of Santa Fe, became aware of the grand possibilities inherent in this decree of 1712. They animated the "Hispanos" with pride concerning their forebears, and got them to participate in one big spontaneous folk festival. Though not Catholics for the most part, they got the Franciscan Fathers, newly returned to the City of the Holy Faith, to take part

36. *Ibid.*; *Inf. Matrim.*, 1694, no. 34; AGI, *Guadalajara*, leg. 139.

37. BNM, leg. 1, pt. 1, p. 790.

38. *Inf. Matrim.*, 1704, no. 6.

39. *Sp. Arch.*, I, no. 13.

as the successors of Fray Antonio Camargo; thus the "Vespers, Mass, and Sermon" were resumed, and the special candlelight Procession to the Cross of the Martyrs inaugurated. But gradually this simplicity was lost.

For the first few years the Santa Fe Fiesta was a genuine Spanish-American folk festival, as it should be, with a touch of Indian participation. Then for a time, certain individuals who took charge emphasized Indian dances and exhibits. For the past decade, "Western" or Hollywood cowboy costumes and hillbilly music have gained the ascendancy. Whatever was left of Spanish-American folklore has been drowned by Mexican music and costuming. This is not to decry the Cowboy-Rodeo-Indian-Mexican influence in the Fiesta, as these elements are all an integral part of the Southwest's historical scene. However, the vacation season has ample room for cowboy, Mexican, and Indian festivities. There are special annual Rodeos already all over the State and in Santa Fe, as well as Indian ceremonies and ceremonials. The Santa Fe Fiesta ought to be a genuine Spanish-American folk festival and nothing else, though not excluding some Pueblo Indian participation, which the Fiesta's original event calls for.