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This thesis, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the Graduate Committee of The University of New Mexico in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

MANUEL ALVAREZ, EMPIRE BUILDER OF THE SOUTHWEST

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MANUEL ALVAREZ, EMPIRE BUILDER OF THE SOUTHWEST

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THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in History

in the Graduate School of
The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

December, 1976

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Abstract

Manuel Alvarez was an influential figure in American expansion. A native Spaniard, he was in Mexico during the events leading to Mexican Independence. In 1824 he went to New Mexico via New York. At Santa Fe he opened a store which he would operate for the rest of his life. At the same time he became active in the fur trading business and, in 1828 tried trapping. As a trapper with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, Alvarez was quickly promoted to Captain. He led forty other trappers to the present Yellowstone National Park, thus becoming one of the first men to see the geysers and boiling pots. By 1833 he was back at his store and establishing a prominent place in the trade along the Santa Fe trail.

On a trip to the States in 1839 Secretary of State John Forsyth appointed the Spaniard to the office of United States Consul at Santa Fe. Given the conditions of the time and place, Consul Alvarez was very unique. As a native Spaniard he represented the antithesis of the recent Mexican Revolution. Here was an individual who was at once a

Mexican citizen, and native of Spain working as a diplomat for the United States.

His advisory was New Mexico's Governor Manuel Armijo. Both men were politically minded men. On many occasions they met to iron out differences. From such confrontations much information was divulged about Mexican and American relationships in New Mexico. While on occasion they cooperated as both were heavily indebted in the Santa Fe trade.

As an active United States Consul Alvarez in some way touched every individual who came to New Mexico. He also met and corresponded with such high officials of the United States as James Buchanan, John Forsyth and Daniel Webster.

In the course of performing his duties he was nearly assassinated by an angry Mexican crowd led by one of Armijo's nephews. The results of this event was a thirty-two page memorial replete with citations and copies of the cited documents. One of the more remarkable documents to come out of the Mexican Period in New Mexico, the Memorial was presented to Secretary of State Daniel Webster.

With the outbreak of the Mexican War Alvarez was instrumental in preparing the way for Kearny's peaceful occupation of New Mexico. The Consul personally talked to the Governor and his advisors trying to convince them of the benefits.

The life of Alvarez illustrates many facets of New

Mexico during the Mexican period. Factions within the society were not racial, as the United States had a commercial influence on northern Mexico. And Alvarez was an important figure of the period.

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Introduction

The Mexican period of New Mexico's history is characterized by the many facets of the populace. Included among its peoples were the Spaniard, the Anglo trader, the French trapper, Indian, Mexican and the merchant, the latter being more a persuasion than reflection of any particular nationality. The major groupings were subdivided into such categories, frequently at odds with one another, such as rich and poor, local and federal authority, Anglo and non-Anglo, and American and Mexican. During the twenty-one years of the Mexican period these developments necessarily included results from Mexico's recently won independence such as the expulsion of Franciscan priests as a result of their supposed loyalty to Spain, a major revolt in resistance to Santa Anna's central authority, the Texas-Santa Fé expedition and the ever recurring Indian attacks.

Underlying these events was American expansion and exploration of its western frontier under the guise of Manifest Destiny.

The "great American desert" had been crossed and trails were opening, not the least of which was the Santa Fe Trail. Here was a route which would focus on an isolated influence of northern Mexico. New Mexicans thus were becoming easily susceptible to American influence. Many native sons would attend Missouri's St. Louis University, a Catholic school. In time, over half the trade between Missouri and New Mexico would be run by native New Mexicans, many educated at United States schools. Santa Fe and Taos would benefit from the rise of the trapping industry. To a great extent these two communities would become the commercial center of that industry in the southern Rockies similar to St. Louis' role to the central and northern Rockies. As a result of the fur trade and the Santa Fe trail, a new mercantile connection would develop with California. The Old Spanish Trail would open with flocks of New Mexican sheep going west in exchange for California mules which were bound for Missouri. The discovery of gold would later increase the trade.

With financial advantages also came problems. From the vantage point of those to be engulfed, the United States mission of Manifest Destiny was very condescending. Geographically, New Mexico was perfectly situated to become involved in the annexation issue with Texas. This meant that half of New Mexico, including its capital and commercial center, Santa Fe, would be claimed as part of Texas. New Mexico was also perfectly situated between the United

States and California. In fact, Andrew Jackson tried to get Texas to extend her western border to include California. During the Mexican War, California was the prize while the Army of the West marched through New Mexico on its way to the Golden State.

If the geographical location of New Mexico had any results, they are to be found in the inattention of the mother country. Neither Spanish nor Mexican authority bothered to assert much control over the isolated province. As a result poverty reigned while the people developed an independent attitude toward central authorities. New Mexicans did not participate in the revolution that resulted in Mexico's independence in 1821; most were not aware of the revolt until the following year, and probably would not have participated had they known. They had become so accustomed to local rule and isolation that they felt little kinship with the central authority. As a result, they would meet with violence any attempt at some new founded attention from the south. This, in turn, left the province subject to foreign influences. So it was that a society traditionally belligerent toward Mexico City was subdued, almost without a fight, by foreign society and government. The culmination came in 1846 when Brigadier General Stephan Watts Kearny marched his army into Santa Fe, militarily effecting an American occupation which had existed unofficially for sometime.

Through all of this lived Manuel Alvarez, a man able

to conform to the many aspects of this period. Alvarez, at first glance, embodied everything that would seem to cause his downfall. But, the man was able to use his multiplex personality to fit the complex New Mexican society. He was a man who, at one time, was a penisular-born Spaniard, Mexican citizen, and United States Consul to Santa Fe. He was fluent in English, Spanish and French, and at various times a traveller, trapper, merchant, stock raiser, and judge. Although formally educated, his greatest source of intelligence was apparently derived from his practical experiences.

There are many historical "giants" of the Mexican period, but Manuel Alvarez has not been considered among them even though he is always present, in some way influencing the historical process. Because of his low profile historians have unanimously overlooked his contributions. This has been done in spite of the fact Alvarez has left volumes of papers in various archives; a bonanza for historians.

It seems that Alvarez was one of those figures who worked best behind the scenes, thus escaping public attention. As a consequence the historian is faced with the problem of establishing the role and influence such a man played in New Mexican and western affairs. For example, as United States Consul in New Mexico, Alvarez served the same function as his counter-part in California, Thomas O. Larkin. Larkin has been given the credit for preparing the way for the American take-over

in Mexican California. But, expansion into California was contingent upon successful occupation of New Mexico. The results would seem to indicate Alvarez was more adept at accomplishing this feat. Did he play a more important role in American expansion than Larkin? Such is one of many questions the life and times of Manuel Alvarez presents.

Chapter 1

The Traveling Spaniard

As the United States Consul to Mexico in Santa Fe, Manuel Alvarez awoke on January 1, 1846, he could have greeted the New Year by reflecting on his life. His youthful years with his two brothers, Angel and Bernardo, and his three sisters, Maria, Basilia, and Engracia, in his home town Abelgas in the Kingdom of Leon,¹ were the years of his early education under the watchful eyes of his parents, Don Jose Alvarez and Dona Marian Antonia Arias. He became proficient in the French language. He also developed a youthful ambition to become a writer and published a few articles for a Madrid magazine.²

A restless young man, Alvarez left home in 1818. He went to Mexico where he remained until 1823, a witness to the chaotic events leading to Mexican independence from Spain in 1821. By 1823 he made his departure from the new republic for Cuba which was still part of the crumbling Spanish empire. Despite the handicap of his Hispanic citizenship, he remained in Mexico two years

following independence. He received a United States passport from the Spanish authorities in Cuba. Wasting no time, he arrived in New York and went to Missouri within the year. While in the border state Alvarez prepared for a trip to northern Mexico as he petitioned Missouri Governor Alexander McNair for a Mexican passport. Alvarez, and his journeying companions, received their traveling papers on September 3, 1824. In these documents, written in Spanish and English, McNair praised the men, expecting this to benefit them; but his praise would later lead to problems for Alvarez. The Governor listed the names of the men and commented that the "traders to Mexico are citizens of the United States to me well known."³ Eleven companions accompanied Alvarez, including Louis and Esidore Robidoux and Antonie Lamanche. All were American traders, most having French or Spanish surnames.⁴

On September 30, 1824 the already well-traveled Spaniard made the perilous journey across the plains to Santa Fé as a member of the Robidoux party.⁵ The Robidoux family, which included nine brothers, played a very influential role in the fur trade of the Southwest. The trip was a revealing experience for Alvarez. This introduction to adventure and camaraderie would prove useful throughout the remainder of his life, aside from immediate dividends. Upon the party's arrival in Taos, Alvarez was employed by Francisco Robidoux, brother of Louis and Esidore, and was immediately involved in a Mexican embargo

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of his employer's merchandise. Robidoux and Alvarez solved the matter by paying the responsible Mexican official a sum of money, ostensibly due from a previous debt.⁶

The Spanish national wasted no time in applying for Mexican citizenship; he did so on three different occasions in 1825 and 1826. Unfortunately, trouble arose over the passport papers Governor McNair had written as Alvarez was included among those described as a citizen of the United States. This seemed suspicious indeed to the Mexican officials. Not only was Alvarez a native of Spain, which made him necessarily suspect as Mexico had just completed a successful revolution against that country, but his official papers of entry were now placing him in double jeopardy.

Alvarez was not about to let such circumstances bother him. Probably to the surprise of all he submitted petitions strewn with prose indicative of his determination to be naturalized.

Siempre, siempre, Señor Eximo. la ansissos por viven entre los suyos y bajo el gobierno liberal causa por que hace ocho anos....⁷

Whether or not Alvarez was granted his petitions is a question over which historians differ. David Weber correctly cites that there is no documented proof of Alvarez ever being naturalized.⁸ On the other hand, Harold Dunham concludes that Alvarez did indeed become a Mexican citizen since Mexican officials began treating

him as such.⁹ Add to this fact that Alvarez always felt he was entitled to the rights of a Mexican citizen, it seems pretty clear that he was eventually naturalized, a major reason being his manifestation of a great zeal for the Catholic faith.¹⁰ Perhaps more important, Alvarez felt that the Mexican Constitution had granted him "the rights of citizenship...by living in their country at the time of their independence."¹¹

Something about Santa Fe, a frontier village, struck his fancy. Perhaps the topography and climate reminded him of Leon. The similarities between his old home in northern Spain and his new home in northern Mexico could have struck him as especially pleasing. He had gone through the "civilized" cities to settle in an isolated mountain town. Then again, Alvarez was quick to take advantage of the material situation in which he had maneuvered. Where the pre-revolutionary Spanish government maintained a mercantile system the post-revolutionary Mexican authorities did not hesitate to throw open their borders to international trade. This meant a new source of wealth for the traditionally neglected frontier town of Santa Fe. By the time Alvarez had arrived, in New Mexico, caravans to Missouri had been making huge profits for three years. Manuel Alvarez found himself perfectly situated to garner the fruits of this continuing wave of commerce. He did not hesitate to open a store in the ancient capital city, which he controlled the rest

of his life.

Alvarez personally operated the store until 1828. This enabled him to remain in contact with the many traders from Missouri and the trappers from the great uncharted lands beyond Santa Fe. He seems to have had the idea of making Santa Fe a fur trade center for the southern Rockies. Thus, while William H. Ashley developed a new system of fur trapping and trading, northern New Mexico witnessed the same transformation more quickly. For example, while Ashley was given credit for drawing the industry away from its dependence on river travel, the men who worked out of New Mexico never had any major rivers on which they could navigate. With furs coming into the conveniently located northern New Mexico towns of Taos and Santa Fe, Alvarez managed to turn a profit via the Santa Fe Trail to St. Louis.

In connection with his new business he made two more trips to Missouri. On his first return trip, he left Missouri for New Mexico in July 1827 in company with Louis Robidoux, Vicente Guiron, and Paul Padillo. Upon arriving in Taos in November Padillo and Alvarez immediately bid for pelts. Alvarez went to Abiquiu to place his bids, purchasing at least twelve furs from Bernardino Valdez.¹² Under the conditions, buying pelts was more economical than trapping, but just as risky. Mexican laws prohibited trapping without a license. Most trappers avoided this by purchasing furs from Mexican citizens who in turn

acquired them from Indians, usually Utes. The risk involved Mexican authorities who seemed to assume any American trapper in possession of a pelt had come by it illegally. Such was the case of Vicente Guion who had his furs confiscated by the comandante of Santa Fe on February 21, 1828. Guion used Alvarez, as his interpreter at the hearing before the first alcalde of Santa Fe, Juan Estevan Piño.¹³

With one more round trip to Missouri, Alvarez had traversed the plains a total of four times since his initial arrival in New Mexico. By the end of the decade the Santa Fe merchant was ready for a new chapter in his life. The lure of "moving on," and his mercantile interest in beaver pelts soon led him to become a mountain man. As such, he is alleged by one historian to have married an Indian woman, a custom not uncommon in trapper-Indian relationships. She is said to have had three children by him, one of whom died. The other two were purportedly sent to Spain where their father visited them in 1843 and 1844.¹⁴ Although Alvarez traveled to Spain on the given dates, the story of matrimonial bliss is convulsively contradicted by Alvarez' Will, in which he states that he has no wife nor "children of any kind." A family tree apparently drawn by Alvarez in 1856 shows no children or wife, in the Will.¹⁵

The fur trapping and trading industry was in full stride when the thirty-four-old Alvarez entered the

the field. Competition was keen between various fur companies, not to mention countries. Many expeditions and trappers had gone out of the Santa Fe and Taos area after Mexican Independence. Indeed, Alvarez and his partner, J. Halcrow, operated as free trappers in association with P.D. Papin and Company, a group which had earlier established business ties with his store. Perhaps to enhance business with such companies was one motive that convinced the merchant to trap.

Much of the territory north into Colorado and Utah had long been familiar to New Mexicans. Trade with the Ute Indians had been established under Spanish rule and continued until 1847 when the Mormons settled in Utah. In the not too distant past Taos had been host to famous trade fairs where Spaniards had met with Pueblo and Plains Indians for barter. Fur trappers discovered Taos to be a virtual winter paradise where they could rest in comparative comfort. With Halcrow, however, Alvarez would go beyond these neighboring regions and serve as a living illustration of the role men from Mexico's northern frontier would play throughout the American West. On his first expedition he operated out of Fort Teton and trapped on the Teton, Little Missouri, and Yellowstone Rivers.¹⁶

When, in 1831, the Papin Company came under control of the American Fur Company, Alvarez and his partner trapped under its auspices for Andrew Drips in the northwest

portion of the modern Yellowstone National Park. By March 1833, Alvarez led about forty men to trap along Henry's Fork of the Snake River and east to the Yellowstone. It was during this expedition that he saw geysers and boiling pots of the present national park. As he had done with his store and would continue to do, he proved successful in this outdoor adventure. If his advancement to "captain" was one hint of this success, his financial achievements were indicative of the same. At the Green River rendezvous in the summer of 1833 he received a note from Lucien Fontenelle, Acting Agent of the American Fur Company, for \$1,325.98.¹⁷ Once again he proved his capabilities by performing above the norm and being paid accordingly. This ability to excel at whatever he attempted and make friends in the process became a significant Alvarez trait.

By 1834, he was back in Santa Fe operating his store with a new partner, Damaso Lopez.¹⁸ With the many acquaintances and knowledge he had acquired as a trapper he was more capable to handle the trading end of the fur industry, even though his fur sales in St. Louis would never amount to a significant portion of his trade.¹⁹

By early 1830 indications of the trapping industry's demise became evident,²⁰ although otter pelts, not as cherished as beaver, could still get as much as \$3.00 per pound in 1835 in New Mexico.²¹ The British had successfully trapped out the Northwest area while

the central Rockies were depleted of fur at an alarming rate. Competition between companies, independent trappers, and the growing popularity of the silk hat over the beaver hat, meant an end to beaver trapping as a profitable occupation. Indeed, the very company for which Alvarez worked had changed owners. The previous management, including one of the most famous and influential of mountain men, Jedediah Smith, knew when to get out of the industry. Smith and his partners were indicative of the many experienced trappers who left the fur trade at the time. Interestingly, as the beaver of the central Rockies became scarce, the trappers either risked their lives by trapping north into the territory of the hostile Blackfeet, or moved into the southern Rockies. This, in turn, gave northern New Mexico an opportunity to corner some of the fur trade that traditionally had gone directly to St. Louis.

Alvarez knew it was not foresight that led to his decision to retire to Santa Fe. Nor was it his business acumen that precipitated his taking on a fellow Spaniard as his partner. Like Don Quixote of literary fame, Don Manuel had left his little home town in Spain on an undefinable quest. Unlike the unfortunate aspiring knight, the sojourner de las Abelgas had tasted success, but he was not yet sated. As a manifestation of this restless spirit, Alvarez traveled to Missouri to procure supplies for his store and apply for United States citizenship.

The application was made on December 16, 1834 at the Circuit Court in St. Louis. Like his earlier applications for Mexican citizenship, he was denied in his bid for American citizenship. Since he lacked the five year residency requirement, Alvarez decided to renew his application later and returned to Santa Fe.

While in Missouri, Alvarez left Domasco Lopez, another peninsula-born Spaniard in charge of his store. With business experience Lopez, had been in New Mexico as early as 1820.²³ In 1833 Lopez had become involved with the Don Jose Francisco Ortiz mining claim. In an official capacity Lopez made the inspection and gave the approving report that cleared the claim for Ortiz and his partner, Ignacio Cano. Since neither of the partners had any mining expertise, they took Lopez in as a third partner. Once the mine began to produce, Ortiz and Cano invoked a law of the Mexican republic forbidding foreigners to mine. Lopez, being Spaniard, was eliminated from the partnership.²⁴ As may be suspected, revenge may have been a hidden motive for the whole affair. Lopez, on behalf of a Chihuahua merchant named Lorenzo had brought suit against Ortiz and Fernando Delgado in Santa Fe on June 19, 1820. Whatever the reasons for his separation from the Ortiz-Cano mining venture, Lopez shortly thereafter joined Alvarez. He later herded sheep to California. Which was another facet of Alvarez's trade.²⁵

The year 1837 brought more memorable events to

Alvarez's life. In 1835, the Mexican President, Santa Anna, sought to centralize his government by appointing one of his own cronies to be governor of New Mexico. Living in virtual frontier isolation from Mexico City politics, New Mexicans were accustomed to having a local jefe govern them. The new governor, Albino Perez, operated therefore at a great disadvantage. In spite of his marriage to a local girl, his implementation of Santa Anna's policies, especially the imposition of new taxes, ripened the New Mexicans for revolt. By August 1, 1837, resistance broke out over the arrest of the alcalde of Santa Cruz de la Cañada. The violence resulted in several deaths, among them that of Albino Perez and his major opponent, José Gonzalez. When the dust settled, Manuel Armijo, a rico New Mexican from the Bernalillo area, emerged as the new governor. The revolt initiated his legendary reputation for military savvy, not to mention his ruthlessness in ordering Gonzalez's immediate execution. No doubt Alvarez, Hispanic by birth, Mexican by expediency, and trader by inclination, sympathized with the New Mexican cause of local rule. After all, Santa Anna's conservative policies could only hinder his business interests. Because Armijo operated under the sanction of the central government, the future of the non-Mexican merchant class loomed dark.

This forbidding future became immediately evident. With the out-break of hostilities the loyalist government

forces led by Perez were forced to rely on the foreign merchants for supplies and money. Given no choice, the merchants acquiesced in the matter. "It even would not have been very safe to have refused them advances...." Besides, they had gladly done business with these people before. The salaries of the government officials involved were usually sufficient collateral to liquidate any American credits. If the salaries did not suffice, the local custom house would stand behind the debts by offering the proceeds of the next caravan as collateral.²⁶

The Anglo traders did not expect the subsequent turn of events. First was the initial battle where the government forces were defeated. At this point the revolutionaries divided the spoils with no intention of assuming the debts of the vanquished. With the subsequent victory of the government forces from the south reparation still was not forthcoming. Armijo apparently sanctioned the enactment of a General Assembly held on August 27 in which the insurgents formally approved "...the division of the property of the deceased persons [Governor Perez and associates], among the principals of the party now in power, thus leaving the creditors of deceased" without any hope of collecting their debts.²⁷ Because Armijo was an official of the same government to which the merchants had been forced to lend financial support, they were surprised to find that the new governor refused to pay.

Left with no recourse, the Americans wrote a memorial to the United States Minister to Mexico, Powhatan Ellis. They felt that only through the Mexican national government could justice be done. Among the signers of the memorial were Alvarez, Josiah Gregg, P.W. Thompson, L.L. Waldo, and Esidore Robidoux, prominent traders of the time. Indeed, the document appears to have been written in part by Alvarez.

The Mexican government gave no more attention to the matter than had the local government. Neither the Mexicans nor the merchants were ignorant of the fact that Texas had revolted in 1836 for much the same reasons as the insurgent New Mexicans. It would not have taken much imagination for Mexican officials to assume that the Anglos, as they had in Texas, led the revolt in New Mexico. Receiving claims from Americans in a department that had just culminated an aborted revolt must have seemed ludicrous to the Mexicans.

Nevertheless, Alvarez persisted. Even the local government refused to budge. In August 1838 Alvarez received an answer to another inquiry when the Secretary of State relayed another Armijo denial. As the reply ended with the statement that the government had to "... concluir otro negocio,"²⁸ the New Mexican officials could afford to be coy.

Two years after the initial memorial Alvarez put his signature at the top of a list attached to another

memorial. This was a second attempt to receive payment for the claims stemming from the 1837 disturbances. Added to the co-signers was the name of Charles Bent.²⁹ Despite the fact that this attempt, like the former, was unsuccessful, the efforts of Alvarez prompted the American traders to write a letter of gratitude to the Spaniard in 1840. He was praised for "the very prompt" unyielding stand he took "under every grade of circumstance... in vindicating our rights." The note ended with their thanks.³⁰ The whole affair was best summed up by a passage Alvarez copied from "Del libro de Brantz Mayen" on December 10, 1843. In part, it spoke of the Texan revolt, "I hold this revolt to have greatly affected the mutual interests and feelings of Mexico and our Union...."³¹ Alvarez could have only have copied this with a whimsical smile on his face.

Despite the above distractions Alvarez did not allow his feelings to interfere with his intention to petition the new governor for a land grant of four leagues square along the Ocaté River near Mora. Alvarez was intrigued with the idea of transporting sheep along the Old Spanish Trail to California. Domasco Lopez, Alvarez' business partner, apparently wished to supervise the operation and had the expertise to do so. Moreover, here was a new source of income for the business. Alvarez was interested in increasing wool productivity had toyed with introducing the better wool producing Moreno

sheep to his stock. Armijo approved the petition on October 16, 1837.³² Although Lopez eventually would take some sheep to California, the enterprise was initially held in abeyance in favor of more pressing matters.

1. Manuel Alvarez, Last Will and Testament, (copy in the Historical Division, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe).
2. Walter D. Sadlowski, Jr., "Manuel Alvarez; Merchant and Trader; Consul and Commercial Agent politico," (Unpublished paper, copy in the Historical Division, Museum of New Mexico) p. 1.
3. Passport, 3 September 1824, Land Grant File, New Mexico Records and Archives, Santa Fe, reel 6, frame 1132, no. 11. Land Grant File hereafter referred to as LGF.
4. Passport, LGF.
5. Harold H. Dunham, "Manuel Alvarez," Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West, ed. by LeRoy Hafen (Glendale; the Arthur H. Clark Company, 1965), p. 182; David J. Weber, The Taos Trappers: The Fur Trade in Far Southwest, 1540-1846, (Norman; The University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), p. 86.
6. Weber, Taos Trappers, p. 94.
7. Petition for Mexican Naturalization, 1825, reel 6, frame 1132, no. 182, LGF.
8. Weber, Taos Trappers, p. 176.
9. Dunham, "Manuel Alvarez," p. 182.
10. Ibid.
11. (Memorial to Secretary of State Daniel Webster), U.S. Department of State, Consular Dispatches, Santa Fe, Manuel Alvarez, Washington 1842, M-199, Roll 1. Copy in possession of the author. Hereafter cited as Memorial.
12. Weber, Taos Trappers, p. 163.
13. Ibid, p. 164.
14. Dunham, "Manuel Alvarez," p. 185.
15. Last Will and Testament, p. 2; Family Tree, Inventories and Reports of Wills and Testaments, 1158-1862, Santa Fe County Probate Court, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe.
16. Dunham, "Manuel Alvarez," p. 186.
17. Ibid.
18. Lansing Bloom, "Ledgers of A Santa Fe Trader," El Palacio XIV, (May 1, 1923), p. 135.

19. Weber, Taos Trappers, p. 40.
20. The last big rendezvous was held on the Green River, near the mouth of Horse Creek, in 1840.
21. Bill signed by David Waldo, October 28, 1835, Alvarez Papers, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe.
22. Alvarez to Secretary of State Daniel Webster, U.S. Department of State, Consular Dispatches, March 4, 1842.
23. Ralph Emerson Twitchess, The Spanish Archives of New Mexico, II, (Cedar Rapids, Iowa; The Torch Press, 1914), p. 626.
24. For various versions of this incident see LeBaron Branford Prince, Historical Sketches of New Mexico, (Kansas City, Ramsey, Millet and Hudson, 1883), pp. 241-42; Rex Arrowsmith, ed., Mines of the Old Southwest, (Santa Fe; The Stage Coach Press, 1963), p. 50; John M. Townley "El Placer: A New Mexico Mining Boom Before 1856," Journal of the West X, (January 1971), pp. 109-10.
25. Sadlowski, "Manuel Alvarez," p. 18. Lopez died while taking sheep to California.
26. U.S. Merchants of Santa Fe to the Honorable Powhatan Ellis Minister plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary From the United States of America to the Republic of Mexico, September 7, 1837, no. 8; page 3; Benjamin Read Collection, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe.
27. Ibid., p. 2.
28. S. Vergara to Alvarez, August 17, 1838, no. 298, Read Collection.
29. Manuel Alvarez Papers, Microfilm in Coronado Room, University of New Mexico, Reel 4, not with the originals at the State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe.
30. U.S. residents in Santa Fe to Alvarez, December 8, 1840, no. 9, Read Collection.
31. Alvarez Papers, reel 4, Coronado Room.
32. Ocaté Land Grant File, Claim no. 1; Dunham, "Manuel Alvarez," p. 193.

Chapter II

Citizenship

By the middle of the nineteenth century New Mexico was at the focal point of the expanding populations of Mexico and the United States. With Mexico's independence the geographical location of New Mexico became crucial. The official sanctions of foreign trade opened the gate for American influence in Mexico's northern department. With the arrival of the fourth decade the area had become an important element in America's plan for expansion to the Pacific Ocean. While becoming an integral part in the creation of an American empire on the Pacific,¹ the area also had to contend with the young Republic of Texas. As demonstrated in the controversy over reparation to the merchants, Mexico had become somewhat apprehensive about its frontier outposts while it simultaneously attempted to expand, and experienced growing pains which New Mexico was to suffer. First came the boundary claims and subsequent Texas invasion. With depredations to caravans along the Santa Fe Trail.²

Because of its new advantageous geo-political location, New Mexico, especially Santa Fe and Taos, became very cosmopolitan. As frontier outposts to Spanish and American society these towns of northern New Mexico became commercial centers. As such, they came to represent important political entities, and were vital to American expansion.

In the midst of such historical developments citizenship became exceedingly important. Citizenship of one country or another could be both advantageous and disadvantageous depending upon the circumstances of a given time. Anglo merchants tried to meet this problem in many ways. Some became naturalized Mexican citizens, while attempting to maintain dual citizenship. Others married Mexican girls in hopes of establishing a basis of rapport with Mexican officials. Good examples of this method are Charles Bent and Kit Carson who married sisters. At the time, engaged trapper, Carson also allowed himself to be baptized a Roman Catholic by the local curate, Padre Antonio Martinez.³ Finally, there were those who pretended they were naturalized citizens, allowing Mexican officials to believe them to be legal residents, while remaining citizens of the United States.

At times it paid to hold United States citizenship. Many traders operated under the "protection" of that citizenship although as a rule, this protection was often wanting. On occasion the Mexican government chose to ignore such protection. The outstanding example here is

Governor Armijo's refusal to lend assistance to the American citizens captured in the Texan expedition. The governor was actually rather consistent since he did no more for the Americans than he did for Thomas Falconer who was an Englishman. Even those Anglo residents of the area who had been naturalized in Mexico received no favors from the governor's policies.

In January 1841 Armijo sent out a circular lambasting foreigners who "pass back and forth" under protection of American laws while paying no attention to local laws.⁴ About a week later, a letter was delivered to Alvarez notifying him of an official order to deport all foreigners who did not have official papers.⁵ The effect of this new policy became evident when, three days later, Alvarez received a letter from an American in Taos. This individual was officially asked about his citizenship and harassed by the local authorities. He requested Alvarez, who was at the time the United States Consul, "to procure...a letter or something that will secure me."⁶

If playing citizenship games was a method of survival for non-Mexican residents, Manuel Alvarez was the master. He was able to play off the rights of citizenship of one country against those of another, many times to his advantage. Yet the game was a two-way street and could easily backfire to the player's disadvantage, as the following circumstance demonstrates.

Until 1842, when Alvarez was naturalized in the United States, the question of his legal citizenship is one of the two major mysteries of his life. There is some doubt that Alvarez was ever granted Mexican citizenship. He petitioned on three occasions in the 1820's with no documentary proof of an acceptance. Yet government officials came to recognize him as a naturalized Mexican. This is evident in the many documents that refer to him as a "Spanish natural and Mexican citizen" and his Mexican passports.⁷ Alvarez never cared to correct these references and, at one time, pointed out that he was naturalized by virtue of his presence during the Mexican Independence. Governor Armijo corroborated this version as justification for impressing Alvarez's property.⁸ Whether or not he was naturalized is a moot point in light of the reality of the situation. That he was not beyond creating a facade in allowing others to mistakenly assume his citizenship is patent in determining his United States citizenship. Three examples will adequately demonstrate his laxness in keeping the record straight. In each case his assumption of American naturalization hinged on an advantage he wished to achieve.

By virtue of his petition for naturalization on October 16, 1834, Alvarez established the fact that he was not a United States citizen nor did he want to be considered a citizen of Mexico. He renounced "all allegiance [sic] and fidelity to every Foreign Prince...whatsoever,

particularly to Isabelle, Queen of Spain, whose subject I then was." in his declaration made at the Circuit Court of St. Louis.⁹ Inability to meet the five year residency requirement led to a refusal of his petition. He did not become a United States citizen until April 9, 1842 when he repeated his declaration in the same court.¹⁰

Although he officially became an American citizen in 1842, he assumed that designation earlier. In 1824 he had allowed Governor McNair of Missouri to issue him a passport in which he was declared a citizen of the United States.¹¹ Possibly he felt being a Spaniard would not suffice to get him back into Mexico because that country had just completed a successful revolution in which Spain and peninsulares were the enemy. Be that as it may, his new "cover" was sufficient enough to accomplish the goal although the passport later caused some difficulty when he petitioned for Mexican citizenship.

On March 4, 1839, over three years before he became an American citizen, Alvarez had once again procured an American passport which proclaimed him "a citizen of the United States." Issued in Washington and signed by Secretary of State John Forsyth, Alvarez again had proven himself adept in the game of multi-nationality. To avoid any unnecessary problems he never signed the document in the designated area.¹²

Alvarez proved presumptuous by including himself among the petitions for protection of American citizens'

rights and property during the Texan invasion. As in the unsuccessful petition for payment of loans made during the 1837 revolt, he was to come up empty-handed after the 1841 incident. He innocently explained to Secretary of State Daniel Webster that he operated as United States Consul "under the full impression, that, I was by virtue of that office entitled to protection as an American citizen."¹³ Alvarez was attempting an approach somewhat akin to the various modes Americans applied toward achieving Mexican citizenship. That act was given in answer to an inquiry from Webster. The Secretary of State had received a letter asking for indemnification to Alvarez for injuries to his property and person suffered during the Texan invasion. Being a little more thorough than Forsyth, Webster replied that he had no information pertaining to Alvarez's citizenship and before the State Department could do anything "it should be informed on that point."¹⁴ Webster would not assume anything, thus leaving the burden of proof on Alvarez. Left with narrowing resources the Spaniard took a new tack which would allow him to withdraw gracefully. As he concluded in his answer, he accepted the United States consularship under the impression that rights of American citizenship were included with the post; "Under these circumstances I am of the impression that I might be considered as an American citizen, and entitled as such."¹⁵

It is interesting that Alvarez did not produce the

the 1839 passport Forsyth had issued to him. This would have lent weight to his argument that his position granted him rights akin to citizenship. Of course, Forsyth had made the appointment, and whether or not he was aware of Alvarez's proper citizenship, is an open question. The introduction of the passport might have produced an answer, which could explain why it never reached Webster's desk.

The next day Webster gave Alvarez his answer. He did not even mention Alvarez's claim via the Consulship. Instead, he apparently took the Consul's answer for an explanation. Because Alvarez had not fulfilled the requirements for naturalization and was not a legal citizen of the United States, Webster issued him "a special passport, which may be useful to you on your return to New Mexico."¹⁶

Seemingly contradicting himself, Alvarez had previously asked Governor Armijo to protect the right of American citizens including himself as a result of the same incidents for which he had sought for reparations. To this the governor replied through his Secretary of State that protection of Americans would be attended to. However, Alvarez's position as United States Consul would not entitle him to those privileges and, as such, he would be treated as any Mexican citizen.¹⁷ Both the American and Mexican governments were in agreement on one point--Alvarez was not a citizen of the United States.

Not all cases ended with Alvarez getting nothing since he was usually more successful than not. On a grand scale he was eminently triumphant. As a peninsular Spaniard successfully functioning as a merchant, an occupation for which pure bloods were stereotyped by other segments of Mexican society, he probably could not have remained in Mexico had he not assumed or received Mexican naturalization and/or become the United States Consul. By doing the latter he appeared to have the protection of that country.

Nothing could be more evident of his astuteness than an episode involving one of his mules. Although a relatively insignificant matter, Alvarez thought it important enough to relate to Secretary of State Webster as an example

of "their [the Mexicans'] eagerness to seize every opportunity to do injustice to the citizens of the United States."¹⁸ Remarkably, he felt he could say this, even though he was not such a citizen. However the relation of this episode was not an attempt to fool the American government, but that of the Mexican authorities.

On August 9, 1848 Alvarez was informed by one of his employees at San Miguel Del Vado that the Juez de Paz had asked for a mule to go on an expedition against the Comanches. The employee, Francisco Robledo, came to Santa Fe with his news at which point Alvarez complained to Armijo. Alvarez referred to a treaty of April 5, between the United States and Mexico which included an agreement

that property of American citizens could not be pressed into public service. He implored the governor "to demand of that Mayor that in this case and in the future cases you would not dispose of my property nor of the property of the American citizens."¹⁹

This must have startled Miranda and Armijo because Alvarez had just been given permission to serve as United States Consul and retain the rights of Mexican citizenship. It is curious that Alvarez phrased the Governor's stand as choosing "to ignore that Mexican citizenship is forfeited as soon as he accepts office from a foreign government."²⁰ In reality Alvarez conived and fought for the retention of that citizenship.²¹ Armijo immediately had his secretary of state reply that the mule could be pressed into public service by right of Alvarez's Mexican citizenship. Alvarez was reminded that the Mexican government had given him permission to retain his citizenship while occupying a foreign office. This answer was written and received the same day on which the complaint was made.²² It was an answer that Alvarez should have expected.

Undaunted, the Spaniard penned an elegant letter to Secretary of State Miranda to "tenga la bondad de presentar mis respetos al Eximo Señor Gobernador" and to completely resolve that the property of the United States Consul and that of American citizens should in the future be free from government confiscation. With tongue in cheek he

concluded the letter "Con este motivo vertuoso a U.S. mis consideraciones y aprecio."²³ Here was a bold move on the part of Alvarez, a test to see how far he could push the local authorities. It was significant that the consul labelled all his letters as coming from the Consulado de los E. U. de America, thus implying the full weight of authority of Mexico's goliath neighbor. Equally significant, and, at first appearance, ludicrous, was that the crux of the whole matter was over one mule to be used for one day on a campaign that would benefit all inhabitants of the area. In reality, Alvarez was wise to press this test case over an unimportant matter. A mule was something of such little consequence it would not rise the ire of Governor Armijo's famous temper. On the other hand, Alvarez, by virtue of his recognized citizenship, took calculated risks. Given Alvarez's intelligence, a distinct possibility exists that he assumed that the American government would protect him by virtue of his position. Thus he applied the argument that he later used on Daniel Webster. However, it seems clear that this line of reasoning would be less likely to persuade the Mexican authorities than it would Webster.

Armijo was apparently caught by surprise. It took him a couple of days longer than necessary to answer, but eventually he granted Alvarez's petition. Alvarez and the Americans were granted protection of their property even though Alvarez was a Mexican citizen.²⁴ As the

merchant said later, the answer was "worded as though he was in a bad humor."²⁵ And well Armijo should be. His Spanish adversary had taken advantage by employing the threat of a third nation. Alvarez had succeeded in his trial. As concerned property his position gave him the same rights as other United States citizens while by the official of correspondence of both governments he still enjoyed Mexican citizenship. At this stage Alvarez assumed that all had worked out well.²⁶ But, he was premature, for Armijo enjoyed a good contest.

Nine days later the alcalde of San Miguel expropriated a mule from Alvarez's clerk. Now it was the Spaniard's turn to be surprised. He sent an immediate complaint to Miranda. This time the letter was terse, minus the niceties. The first line rather quickly stated the point of the entire missive. The secretary was informed of the alcalde's action which was a direct contradiction of the last communication in the matter. Surprise was expressed that the alcalde, who could not possibly be ignorant of the matter, would so blatantly disregard the law. He also informed Miranda that he expected some sort of reparation.²⁷

It should be noted that Alvarez included mention of American citizenship at all times. Alvarez was always cognizant of his position as the point of the whole affair may have been to establish just where the Mexicans stood, relative to American citizens.

In answer to his complaint the governor took the easy way out. Probably both the Consul and Armijo knew all along that the ultimate defense was to plead ignorance on the part of the alcalde. By doing so Armijo absolved himself and the government he represented. By adding the disclaimer that Alvarez should be aware that not all alcaldes can be expected to comprehend the confusing laws governing the various peoples,²⁸ the way was left open for repeated disclaimers based on the ignorance of a lesser official. By so doing, Armijo reoccupied some ground he had originally lost to his cantankerous friend. When it came to the failure of minor officials to implement laws, ignorance proved an excuse rather than a reason.

Alvarez was typical of the many merchants, trappers or extranjeros in Mexico's isolated department, the only difference being that he played the nationality game all the way to the upper echelons. From an original misrepresentation of a passport in 1824 to the confrontations with Daniel Webster and Manuel Armijo, Alvarez ran the gauntlet. It was a hazardous game that could be worked to advantage.

1. For an interesting overview on this matter see Norman A. Graebner, Empire on the Pacific; A Study in American Continental Expansion (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1955), (New York, 1955).
2. First hand accounts of the Texas-Santa Fe expedition are George Wilkens Kendall, Narrative of the Texan-Santa Fe Expedition, vol. I and II (Austin: The Steck Company, 1935), and Thomas Falconer, Letters and Notes On the Texan-Santa Fe Expedition, 1841-1842. Both accounts are pro-Texan as both authors were members of the expedition. Almost any reputable book on American expansion deals with Texan border claims.
3. David Lavender, Bent's Fort (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1954), p. 220.
4. Juna Andres Archuleta to Damaso Lopez, Prefect of the First District, January 15, 1841, no. 171, Read Collection.
5. Guadalupe Miranda to Alvarez, December 24, 1840, no. 204, Read Collection.
6. Simeon Turley to Alvarez, January 28, 1841, Alvarez Papers.
7. For a sampling see Luis G. Cuevas to Manuel Armijo, March 10, 1840, W.G. Ritch Papers, no. 183, Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Guadalupe Miranda to Alvarez, April 23, 1840, no. 203, Read Collection; Manuel Armijo, passport for Consul Manuel Alvarez, October 25, 1841, Read Collection; Dunham, "Manuel Alvarez," Alvarez as being treated as a Mexican citizen in the twenties.
8. Memorial, p. 15-6.
9. Manuel Alvarez to Daniel Webster, Secretary of State March 4, 1842, U.S. Department of State, Consular Dispatches, Santa Fe, 1836-1846.
10. Alvarez, Official certificate of U.S. naturalization, April 9, 1842, no. 5, Read Collection; Alvarez to Webster, May 4, 1842, Consular Dispatches.
11. Passport, September 3, 1824, LGF.
12. Passport, March 4, 1839, Read Collection.
13. Alvarez to Webster, March 4, 1842, Consular Dispatches.
14. Secretary of State Daniel Webster to Alvarez, March 3, 1842, no. 308, Read Collection.

15. Alvarez to Webster, March 4, 1842, Consular Dispatches.
16. Webster to Alvarez, March 4, 1842, no. 309, Read Collection.
18. Alvarez, Memorial, p. 17.
19. Alvarez to Miranda, August 10, 1841, frames 1328-29, Mexican Archives of New Mexico, Governor's Papers received by Secretary of Government, January 15 - December 2, 1841. Hereafter referred to as MANM. Alvarez, Memorial, Alvarez gives the date as August 16 even though the copy of the cited letter has the correct date of August 10. The Memorial gives a straight-forward account of the events, replete with citations for each pertinent document, (citations of which are included). For purposes of this paper the originals of those letters will be used, the only discrepancy being the aforementioned date.
20. Alvarez, Memorial, p. 16.
21. Alvarez to Governor Manuel Armijo, August 21, 1839, Reel 4, Alvarez Papers, Coronado Room.
22. Miranda to Alvarez, August 10, 1841, no. 212, Read Collection. The copy attached to the Memorial is labeled "letter O." The date is incorrectly given as August 1, 1841 in the calendar to the Read Collection. Internal evidence, the document itself, and the copy in Alvarez's hand attached to the Memorial all attest to the correct date, August 10, 1841.
23. Alvarez to Miranda, August 11, 1841, frame 1330, MANM, Governor's Papers. The translations are, "you have the kindness of presenting my respects to his Excellency the Governor," and "With this virtuous motive [I send] to you my considerations and esteem". The copy attached to the Memorial is numbered "letter 21."
24. Jorge Ramirez to Alvarez, August 14, 1841, no. 254, Read Collection. The copy attached to the Memorial is lettered "p".
25. Alvarez, Memorial, p. 16.
26. Ibid.
27. Alvarez to Miranda, August 23, 1841, frames 1332-33, MANM, Governor's Papers. The copy attached to the Memorial is numbered "22".

28. Miranda to Alvarez, August 25, 1841, no. 213, Read
Collection. The copy attached to the Memorial is lettered
"Q".

Chapter III

Exequatur and A Diplomatic Career

exequatur. The authority formally vested in a foreign consul by the country to which he is sent and by virtue of which he is able to exercise his official functions within its territorial limits.¹

During the spring of 1838 Manuel Alvarez made another journey to Missouri where he was appointed United States Consul to Santa Fe on March 21, 1839.² Appointed by Sec. of State John Forsyth, Alvarez' commission was not unusual within the government's diplomatic branch. For one thing, it served the logical need to have in office an individual privy to the local situation. Additionally, Consuls were not usually paid. Indeed, Alvarez' official certificate of appointment stipulated that he was without salary,³ although granted a small expense account.⁴ This miserly policy risked developing a self-interested and inactive diplomacy in the borderlands. Such was the case of Alvarez' predecessor in Santa Fe, Ceran St. Vrain.⁵ Inactivity was not characteristic of Alvarez' tenure as Consul to Santa Fe, and his activist interpretation of his official duties immediately clouded reality of his

Consular appointment.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, there were two major points in Alvarez' life where confusion existed, first being his citizenship and, second, his official standing as United States Consul. The American and Mexican governments held contrary views on his official recognition. Such a situation could only be perplexing to the man involved, and this was magnified by the historical context. Being at the flash point of two civilizations, New Mexico provided a tough problem for the chief representatives of the involved governments. As the United States Consul, Alvarez also had to work at a disadvantage relative to his international adversary, Governor Manuel Armijo. The Governor had the home advantage.

Armijo did have his own problems to consider. His department was traditionally neglected by the central authorities in Mexico City. Under Spanish and Mexican rule the traditionally poor outpost had to survive on its own, sometimes waiting as long as three years between supply trains from the south. Armijo was constantly trying to wrench supplies and men from his superiors. Such attempts were always futile because his department bordered the rebellious Texan Department. Although Americans and Texans considered Texas' severance from Mexico complete with the Treaty of Velasco in 1836, the Mexican government continued to view the Texans as rebellious subjects in conflict with the legitimate government in Mexico City. The threat of a Texan invasion, its actual

occurrence, along with Texan western border claims, arising from the Treaty of Velasco which included Santa Fe and half of New Mexico, only served to heighten Armijo's anxiety.

Finally, was the clash of two civilizations. The United States was an expanding and aggressive society, and it was no secret to the New Mexican Governor, especially since local Anglo merchants kept him supplied with American newspapers. He could see the development, prejudices, and ambitions of "Young America."

Confronted with expanding ambitions on two fronts and getting no support from Mexico City Armijo found himself in a difficult position. And in 1839 the Governor had Alvarez as the United States Consul seriously representing the interests of Anglos in New Mexico. The Spaniard was representing the very class Armijo suspected as agents of Texas or as potential trouble makers on behalf of the United States.⁶

Alvarez received his consular bond as he returned to Santa Fe either in, or just before he arrived in Independence, Missouri. He was informed that the Minister to Mexico would apply for his Exequatur from the Mexican government. The Minister, Powhatan Ellis, would then forward his formal recognition to Santa Fe. He was further instructed by Secretary Forsyth that he was "not authorized to perform any act as Consul until an Exequatur has been granted" him unless properly accepted by authorities in Santa Fe.⁷

Enclosed also were instructions that Alvarez perform the formality of executing an enclosed blank consular bond. Alvarez needed a certificate from a United States attorney to verify the "securities," his papers of office.⁸ He took the Bond to L.L. Waldo, member of a wealthy St. Louis family. L.L.'s brother, David, was an acquaintance of Alvarez in the Santa Fe trade. Thus, it was no coincidence that Waldo received the charge of certifying Alvarez's Bond of Office.

Unfortunately Alvarez left Missouri before Waldo was able to perform the proper task. He had informed Waldo of the deed but somehow missed the connection during "the bustle of the caravan setting out from Independence."⁹ As a result Waldo did not bother to certify the Bond. Alvarez arrived in Santa Fe confident that his diplomatic papers were in order and immediately assumed his duties as Consul. Actually, it appears he began exercising his consular authority even before arriving in Santa Fe. Matt Field, journalist for the New Orleans Picayune, had been sent on a western writing venture by his editor, James Wilkins Kendall. Apparently, he had received his passport in Missouri on June 1, 1839 from the newly appointed Consul.¹⁰

Since Waldo failed to act on the Bond, Alvarez technically violated his instructions from Secretary Forsyth. This drew forth from the new Consul a written apology to his superior and a despatch to L.L. Waldo to send the Bond to the State Department without delay.¹¹ Additionally, Alvarez wrote to Forsyth, he lacked the

the paraphernalia of his office, notably "an American flag, a coat of arms, and a Consular Seal." He tactfully suggested that his predecessor, General St. Vrain, never cared enough to get the vitally needed Seal rather than the Department deliberately withholding it.¹² The Seal was important to the function of his office. It legitimized all official correspondence emanating from his office. It was a formal means of recognition.

Since Alvarez did not have the Consular Seal, it appeared that this snafu cast an unfavorable light on Washington officials. He therefore requested a Seal from Minister Powhatan Ellis in Mexico City. Ellis replied that "the articles in question are not furnished to the Legations of the United States for distribution among their Consuls." Failing to consider the Seal and Coat of Arms as significant as Alvarez had, Ellis sent an impression of the Seal used by the Consul in Mexico City with the suggestion that he have one "made to order" in St. Louis. In any case the government could foot the bill.¹³ Alvarez could not accept this carefree attitude, he continued to insist that the Department provide his Seal.

If Alvarez had difficulties with the American government over his appointment, they paled in significance over his delayed formal acceptance by Mexico City. He presented a unique situation in that he was not a citizen of the United States. He was a native of Spain and citizen of Mexico who wished to represent United States citizens in their relations with Mexico. Alvarez doubtlessly had

the advantage of the many friends he had made, not to mention his tri-cultural personality and intelligence. There were many citizens of the United States who were familiar with Mexico's northern frontier. Many merchants on the Santa Fe Trail might have been appointed Consul because they could speak fluent Spanish and were American citizens as well. And here was Alvarez issuing passports to them!

The Consular appointment did place Alvarez in a different position in Santa Fe. As a Mexican citizen he was unsure what his employment by a foreign government would do to his citizenship status. He had a lot to lose if the Mexican government became obstreperous. By this time he had a prosperous and well established store, land holdings, and many connections in the Santa Fe trade. All could be lost. The fact that he was a native of Spain boded ill if he was stripped of his Mexican citizenship. Indeed, his place of birth would make it easier for the Mexican authorities to accomplish his financial destruction.

By the end of June, 1839 the new Consul was in Santa Fe to proceed with his new position.¹⁴ He had decided to convince the Mexican authorities that he, a Spaniard, could function in the apparently contradictory roles of Mexican citizen and United States Consul. The problem would not be easy to overcome. Governor Armijo, who occupied that office for all but one of the years Alvarez held his diplomatic post was a master politician. The Governor could not have this "pure blood" officially

defending the rights of all Amerians. It implied criticism of the Mexican administration.¹⁵ Alvarez had already been informed that Powhatan Ellis would soon petition for his exequatur as Consul to Santa Fe. He had to act quickly. Mexico had a law which eliminated the rights of Mexican citizenship so long as that person held office for a foreign country. This meant that if he had not lost it already, he could lose his citizenship rights as soon as Mexico City was informed of his appointment. Formal recognition through the granting of exequatur would certainly mean the end of his naturalized citizenship. It would have been inane to ask Forsyth or Ellis to delay the process. After all, as previously mentioned, he had the Secretary of State believing he was a citizen of the United States.

In August 1839 Alvarez informed the New Mexican government, specifically Armijo, that he enjoyed his rights under the Mexican Constitution which granted them by virtue of his presence during Independence. He expounded the dilemma that the recent honor of his appointment by the Señor Presidente de los Estados Unidos and that the laws of Mexico would take away the citizenship he enjoyed. Next came the point. As he wanted to retain his Mexican citizenship while fulfilling the office of U.S. Consul, would the Governor solicit of the supreme Congress in Mexico City that he be able to do so?¹⁶ Armijo accomodated the Spaniard's unusual request. Undoubtedly the ensuing

correspondence, not to mention raised eyebrows, slowed the process of granting Alvarez an exequatur. Although Powhatan Ellis was officially told the reason for delay was the unstable conditions of New Mexico, Alvarez' citizenship controversy was no little cause for the delay.¹⁷

Meanwhile, Washington, completely unaware of Alvarez, dealings with the Mexican government, hesitated to issue his official recognition. On February 12, 1840 Alvarez' official certificate was signed, which he later received. However, Forsyth had a letter drawn up in which the Consul was officially informed of the Senate's confirmation of his nomination. The letter was never signed, because Powhatan Ellis had informed the Department that the Mexican government had refused to acknowledge Alvarez as Consul.¹⁸

On February 17, 1840, the day after the unsent letter was drafted, Alvarez received word from Secretary Guadalupe Miranda that the local government had recognized him as Consul in order to maintain tranquility within the Department.¹⁹ Armijo had yet to receive an answer to Alvarez' request to maintain his Mexican citizenship of the central authorities. Although Alvarez was completely unaware of the matter at the time, his petition to retain his Mexican citizenship had left him unrecognized by both Washington D.C. and Mexico City. Shortly thereafter, Governor Armijo received an official despatch from Luis G. Guevas, Minister of the Interior. The President of Mexico, said Minister Guevas, granted permission that

that Alvarez be able to "administer and perform the duties" of Consul "without prejudice of his rights of citizenship." Guevas then passed the information to the Minister of Foreign Relations to expedite Alvarez' exequatur as soon as the Spaniard's certificate of appointment was presented.²⁰ Armijo quickly fulfilled Guevas' wishes and informed Alvarez that the central government had granted his petition and now waited upon the presentation of his commission.²¹ At this point the Consul believed all was well, but when his exequator had not arrived in Santa Fe by December 1840, he became impatient. Until he received his exequatur, he was unable to act in an official capacity. "I continued to perform the duties of Consul," wrote Alvarez, "not doubting that the exequatur would be sent to me by Honorable P. Ellis."²² Even though he was in violation of his instructions not to act until he received his exequatur, he limited his activities to avoid as much trouble as possible.²³ His impatience caused him to inquire of Ellis about his formal recognition; "Being named Consul would give me in Confidential relations in behalf of our fellow citizens which is formally denied."²⁴ A month later he again inquired about his exequatur to Minister Ellis.²⁵

Alvarez never received his exequatur, for which he blamed Governor Armijo. The Governor, claimed Alvarez, was granted powers from Mexico City to withhold recognition. Given his power and his purely personal considerations,

Armijo would not care to allow Alvarez to "exercise the duties of Consul independently of his influence."²⁶ Besides, it would conflict "with his plan of monopoly of the Santa Fe trade."²⁷ Armijo held all the diplomatic cards. He could informally recognize Alvarez while checking the formality of the exequatur. By so doing the Governor was in a position to withdraw recognition whenever it was convenient. This was contrary to Guevas' instruction. That Armijo could maneuver thus indicated Mexico City's weak control over the Department. The central government's acquiescence in granting Armijo such autonomy might have been due to suspicions raised by Alvarez.

The Mexican government and Alvarez appear never to have informed Washington D.C. that he had sought to retain the rights of Mexican citizenship. Indeed, the clever merchant allowed Secretary Forsyth to assume that he was an American citizen!

On the other hand, the Mexican authorities were kept in the dark about any official troubles the Consul was having with the Department of State. That he was never officially allowed to perform his duties because he lacked a Seal and thus instructed to wait for his exequatur was never made known to the Mexicans. Alvarez acted on the assumption that the American government was totally behind him. The celebrated case of the mule, discussed above demonstrated his diplomatic expertise. Mexican officials

apparently were unable to attach any significance to the matter.

Even without his exaquetur, Alvarez performed his myriad duties. In connection with an 1839 case heard before Felipe Sena, First Alcalde of Santa Fe, the official document had to be verified by Alvarez. The case involved an American citizen which meant the Consul, in his official capacity inscribed below Sena's signature.

This is to certify that I believe the signature to be that of Don Felipe Sena first Alcalde of Santa Fe and not being in possession of a seal of office I hereunto place my private seal...²⁸

One of his first official acts was to write a five and one half page memorial to the Prefect of First District to certify his claim and those of other United States merchants for money and merchandise given to Governor Albino Perez prior to August 9, 1837. Each page was written on officially stamped paper of the Mexican government.²⁹ Within a month he received the advice from Miranda that he use his own papel de Sello for official communication.³⁰ Since he had no official Seal, Alvarez used his private Seal then resorted to labelling all of his correspondence as that of the Consulate of the United States of America.

Notwithstanding his lack of official recognition, Alvarez preceded to perform the duties incombent upon his office. Even though he received lukewarm receptions from both governments, he became increasingly persistent in performing his Consular duties. He felt justified in

acting, as he explained to Forsyth's successor, Daniel Webster, because he had been recognized by Armijo on his own authority and subsequently on the authority of the President of Mexico. And, he "was recognized as Consul by all the inhabitants of Santa Fe."³¹

No matter how hard he worked, Alvarez was always aware of the reality of his situation. Any effort made in dealing with the Mexican government always held the possibility of his being terminated by his lack of exequatur. By the middle of 1843 he became convinced the United States needed a duly acknowledged Consular agent "who could publically [sic] represent to the supreme authority of that country" any wrongs.³² Alvarez was not the only merchant who was aware of his limitations. His good friend, business partner and informer from Taos, Charles Bent, had enumerated the many disadvantages under which Alvarez worked. After implying that the Consul was invested with something less than full powers and citing New Mexico's distance from the American Minister in Mexico City, Bent believed it to be impossible for Alvarez to operate with total effectiveness or with the aid of his senior diplomat. Also, Bent added, "You have also labored under other disadvantages; you have not been recognized as Consul as yet, by the authorities of Mexico." Yet, Bent could see the positive effect of the Consul's exertions, "notwithstanding these great disadvantages."³³

A new Presidential administration in Washington and an act of Congress opened the way for a solution to

the Consul's ambiguous position. One provision of the Drawback Bill passed by the second session of the twenty-eighth Congress, created the position of Consul or Commercial Agent to Santa Fe. The administration of James K. Polk realized in the creation of a Commercial Agency a method by which the American government could avoid, even ignore, Mexico's unwillingness to grant exequatur. The functions of a Commercial Agent would not require recognition.³⁴

Alvarez was the natural nominee for the new post. With this in mind his old friend, David Waldo, set out to make sure that the Polk administration became aware of the Spaniard. The result was a recommendation to Secretary of Treasury, Robert J. Walker, asking that the esteemed merchant be appointed.

No gentleman stands higher in this Section of our State than Mr. Alvarez, and from his acquaintance with the Spanish and French tongues would much facilitate the transaction of business, among foreigners in Mexico.³⁵

Enclosed with Waldo's recommendation was a petition in support of Alvarez which contained one hundred forty-two signatures of prominent merchants in the Santa Fe trade.³⁶ The letter and petition were forwarded to the Department of State.

The perceptive Alvarez may have been the person who suggested to Buchanan the concept of bypassing the necessity of exequatur when he wrote in reference to the petition his friends sent. He asserted with reservation that the Mexican government would make no objection to granting

the exequatur because Armijo was out of office.³⁷

However, there was always the possibility that the resilient Armijo would return to power. If that should happen, wrote Alvarez to Buchanan, "should the Department deem it advisable to forward the Seal corresponding to the commercial Consulate," with the proper papers he would accept the appointment "with pleasure."³⁸

About eight months later Buchanan finally sent Alvarez's appointment as Commercial Agent to Santa Fe. Buchanan took his Consul's advice, so he felt the appointment was not necessary until Armijo did indeed return to office. Also, Alvarez took the opportunity to go on a trip through the United States and Europe, thus rendering any speed inconsequential on Buchanan's part. So on March 19, 1846, the Secretary of State sent a letter enclosing Alvarez' appointment, General Instructions and the long sought-after Seal of Office. As Armijo had returned to office, Buchanan explained to Alvarez, the President was unwilling to appoint a full United States Consul rather than Commercial Agent. The Spaniard was also expected to report semi-annually.³⁹

Back from his trip and unaware of Buchanan's action, Alvarez was quick to jot off his recurring request to the Secretary of State, this Consulate is without an official seal and to remark that such a seal is particularly necessary now..."⁴⁰ The Consul had no idea that his new appointment had been drawn up just nine days before.

Almost tragic-comically, given the conditions under which Alvarez held his diplomatic office, probably his last known official correspondence to the Secretary of State acknowledged his receipt of appointment with the coveted Seal of Office. But he added

...it was detained, as General Kearney ordered the commercial caravan to march in his rear...and (it was) only delivered a few days since. Owing to the change of Government I think it unnecessary to have the bond filled up, I am also in receipt of the Seal of Office and the accompanying documents, I will under the above impression, defer the giving bond, unless otherwise directed.⁴¹

Thus ended a diplomatic career in which Alvarez never was fully recognized by Mexico nor the the United States, even though he spent the whole of that career seeking recognition. He was a diplomatic agent who had to perform his duties clandestinely in a very difficult situation.

1. James A. Ballentine, Law Dictionary With Pronunciations.
2. National Archives and Records Service, Records of the Department of State, Record group 59.
3. Official Certificate of Office, February 12, 1840, Consular Dispatches.
4. John Forsyth to Alvarez, March 22, 1839, no. 145, Read Collection; Powhatan Ellis to Alvarez, November 2, 1839, no. 142, Read Collection.
5. David Lavender, Bent's Fort, (Lincoln; University of Nebraska Press, 1972), pp 191-2.
6. Lavender, Bent's Fort, p 207.
7. Secretary of State John Forsyth to Alvarez, March 22, 1839, no. 145, Read Collection.
8. Alvarez to Forsyth, September 20, 1839, Consular Dispatches.
9. Ibid.
10. John E. Sunder, ed., Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail, (Norman; University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p xix.
11. The instruction violated was Art. I, Chapter 1 of the General Instructions; Forsyth to Alvarez, March 22, 1839, no. 145, Read Collection.
12. Alvarez to Forsyth, September 20, 1839, Consular Dispatches.
13. Powhatan Ellis to Alvarez, November 2, 1839, no. 142, Read Collection.
14. Alvarez Papers, Reel 4, Coronado Room. He arrived with the "Walworth and Alvarez Party" in June 1839.
15. F.W. Hodge, "Santa Fe and the Far West, 1841," (reprint from Niles National Register), New Mexico Historical Review, (Vol. V, no. 3, July 1930), p 303; and Daniel Tyler, "Governor Armijo's Moment of Truth," Journal of the West, (vol. XI, no. 2, April 1972), p 310.
16. Letter to Armijo, August 21, 1839, reel 4, Alvarez Papers, Coronado Room.
17. Ellis to Alvarez, November 2, 1839, no. 142, Read Collection.
18. Unsigned letter to Alvarez, February 17, 1840, Consular Dispatches.

19. Miranda to Alvarez, February 18, 1840, no. 201, Read Collection. A copy of this letter is attached to the Memorial and lettered "A."
20. Minister of the Interior Luis G. Guevas to Manuel Armijo, March 10, 1840, RI 183, Ritch Papers.
21. Miranda to Alvarez, April 23, 1840, copy lettered B, Memorial; Miranda, circular to the Prefects of the Department of New Mexico, March 20, 1840, no. 202, Read Collection. Alvarez to Powhatan Ellis, December 12, 1840, copy numbered 8, Memorial.
22. Memorial, p. 2.
23. Alvarez to Ellis, December 12, 1840, copy numbered 8, Memorial.
24. Ibid.
25. Alvarez to Ellis, January 10, 1840, copy numbered 4, Memorial.
26. Alvarez to Secretary of State James Buchanan, June 18, 1845, Consular Dispatches.
27. Alvarez to Webster, July 1, 1843, Consular Dispatches.
28. Document dated August 1, 1840, Abiel Leonard Collection, 1786-1909, State Historical Society of Missouri, University of Missouri, Columbia.
29. Alvarez, Memorial to the Prefect of the first District, November 5, 1839, no. 86, Read Collection.
30. Miranda to Alvarez, December 5, 1839, no. 200, Read Collection.
31. Alvarez to Secretary of State Daniel Webster, March 2, 1842, Consular Dispatches.
32. Alvarez to Webster, July 1, 1843, Consular Dispatches.
33. Charles Bent to Alvarez, April 29, 1843, Consular Dispatches.
34. Buchanan to Alvarez, March 19, 1846, quoted in John Bassett Moore, ed, The Works of James Buchanan Comprising His Speeches, State Papers and Private Correspondence, Vol. VI, (New York; Antiquarian Press Ltd., 1960), pp. 423-24.
35. David Waldo to Secretary of Treasury Robert J. Walker, March 26, 1845, General Services Administration, Diplomatic Branch of National Archives, Washington D.C. Hereafter cited as GSA.

36. Petition to the Department of Treasury, March 25, 1845, GSA.
37. Alvarez to Buchanan, June 18, 1845, Consular Dispatches.
38. Ibid.
39. Buchanan to Alvarez, March 19, 1846, The Works of James Buchanan, pp. 423-4.
40. Alvarez to Buchanan, March 28, 1846, Consular Dispatches.
41. Alvarez to Buchanan, September 4, 1846, Consular Dispatches.

Chapter IV

The Trouble With Texans

Nothing prepared Alvarez for the arrival of the Texan expedition in 1841. It embodied the worst fears of the local Mexican authorities. Involved was a third country which implicated the Anglo-American citizens in New Mexico. in a conspiracy to undermine the Mexican government.

The Texan invasion of New Mexico created real problems for Alvarez who, as representative for the American citizens, he was somewhat alienated from the Mexican population. Although Texas had claimed her independence, the Mexican government did not recognize it. Mexico still considered herself at war with a rebellious Department. The native New Mexicans saw the approaching Texans as an extension of the war. Whether or not the President of Texas Mirabeau Lamar or his commander General McLeod, intended to forcefully prove their claims of an extended Texas is moot. The local population was up in arms and sentiment was that the Americans were in sympathy with the Texan cause. This was true, in some cases, but not so with the majority of extranjeros.

Some of the motivation behind the whole affair was due to the innocent activities of American merchants in New Mexico. Of no little influence was the successful 1839 caravan Josiah Gregg had taken to Santa Fe from Van Buren, Arkansas, which attracted Lamar's attention. It would not be much to blaze a route a little further south so that Texas could reap some wealth of the Santa Fe trade. To that end in 1840 William Dryden became Lamar's commissioner to New Mexico.¹ Dryden had run afoul of Armijo over the murder of a man named Alexander Daley near the placer mines southwest of Santa Fe. Over Armijo's lax treatment of the culprits, Dryden led a angry protest, which brought a nonviolent confrontation with Mexican militia.² Dryden had very little, if any, respect for the Mexican people.

Other Anglos, such as Thomas Rowland, William Workman and Charles Bent, were implicated with Dryden.³ Tom Rowland denied the accusations even though his house in San Miguel was ransacked with \$1,000 in damages. He sought restitution through Alvarez.⁴ At the same time Charles Bent and William Workman were accused by Juan B. Vigil, a lawyer in Taos. This accusation incensed both merchants who resorted to frontier-style justice. Influenced by the recent February decrees for deporting extranjeros,⁵ the two Taoseños had little faith in Mexican justice. They immediately found their accuser and inquired for what reason the false charges were made. Apparently Vigil's answer was not sufficient as Workman preceded to beat

him, first with a whip, then with his fists, until Bent called him off.⁶ As Bent explained, such violence was necessary because Vigil expected it, and he "would rather wipe [sic] a man...the [sic] have him punished ten times by the law."⁷ Bent forwarned Alvarez of the problem. When arrested for beating Vigil, Bent asked Alvarez to solicit the governor's aid: "You will recollect the promises I told you that had been made to one in Santa Fe. Now they will be tested." Also, Alvarez was to tell the Governor he would get the powder promised.⁸ The local judge, wishing to confer with Armijo, suspended the case and confined Bent to his house. The next day Bent sent Armijo via Alvarez one keg of powder and ten kegs of coffee. Alvarez received a set of seven volumes of history for his efforts.⁹ The promises were apparently made good as Bent was released.

However Vigil continued to make accusations. He even threatened the local judge. A month later Bent with four men would have probably given him an even better sampling of frontier justice, but the barking of Vigil's dogs saved him. He took refuge in Cordova where he asked for an armed escort out of the valley. A few more scares, thought Bent, would solve the problem.¹⁰

Workman had seen enough. For fear of his and his family's safety he, like other Anglos, decided that they would be better off elsewhere. Besides, Dryden had already left because local authorities found a letter addressed to him on one of the Texan prisoners.¹¹ As early as January 1841

everyone knew what the Texans were up to.¹² The effects of a Texan visit worried them and, as demonstrated, not without cause.

The situation worsened when Armijo received definite word that the Texans were getting close. On September 11, word came via the Comanche Indians. Four days later two deserters, an Italian and a New Mexican, from the Texan expedition arrived in Santa Fe. Alvarez got wind of a rumor that the deserters had named some prominent Americans in New Mexico as involved with the expedition.¹³ Such rumors upset the public. Confirming Alvarez's worse fears, the results of months of Armijo's warnings, the clergy's sermons, together with these new rumors, endangered the lives and property of many Anglo traders. At one point the local militia had to disperse a mob in Santa Fe's plaza. As Consul, Alvarez was the only official to whom the Americans could turn. His forays with Armijo could now serve an immediate purpose. The principle was more than one mule. It was that which the mule represented. Alvarez had used the mule to set a precedent which now amounted to his biggest asset. There were other occasions on which Alvarez used as an opportunity to operate in his official capacity.¹⁴ But, as the Texans approached, Armijo, confronting some very real problems, became more impatient.¹⁵ Matters came to a head in September of 1841.

Immediately after the Comanche reports Alvarez had a personal conference with Armijo to express his concern for the Americans' safety. The Consul explained, and

officially petitioned, that all alcaldes and Jueces de Paz of towns in which foreigners resided be ordered to respect foreigners' persons and property. This the Governor verbally promised.¹⁶ The actual letter was written a day after the conversation. Alvarez was satisfied with the government's action. He was pleased that the Governor would openly inform him of the Texan approach and that the necessary precautions were taken. Alvarez responded with a statement that "this proposition appeared to me just and to inform me of it kind, for which I am infinitely gratified."¹⁷ Miranda replied on behalf of the Governor that Alvarez could be assured about the Governor's word. He dará toda protección conforme a los tratados," -- will give all the protection in conformity with the treaties between the neighboring countries. However, the Governor offered protection only on the condition that foreigners do nothing to aid the Texans.¹⁸ The next day when the two deserters arrived Alvarez received information that some Americans had been insulted by some local Mexicans.¹⁹ This knowledge, plus excitement over the arrival of the deserters, caused him to reiterate his previous requests.²⁰ He did not blame the Governor for the incidents as he realized Armijo could not be responsible for everything. [A conciliatory reply, Alvarez received.] Good feelings notwithstanding, some worried American citizens drafted a letter to Daniel Webster expressing fears of robbery and murder.²¹

These fears were realized in an incident involving Alvarez. A few minutes after Armijo and his army marched out of Santa Fe, the Governor's nephew, Ensign Don Thomas Martin, and a friend, Sergeant Pablo Dominguez, galloped into the plaza. They took a Texan prisoner out of jail and, with a crowd of locals, entered Alvarez's office in an apparent attempt to provoke the Consul. The goal, Alvarez was convinced, was assassination. Martin got to Alvarez first and, as the victim relates it, just as "I was about to master him"²² Dominguez came to Martin's aid while the mob followed shouting, "saquelo afuera! matenlo!" --drag him out! kill him.²³ The Spaniard sustained a severe knife slash in the face. If it had not been for the quick action of Guadalupe Miranda who rode up and dispersed the mob, Martin would have easily killed the Consul. Armijo cannot be accused of having prior knowledge of the incident because there is not tangible proof. But it did not upset him. Martin and Domingues soon received military promotion while the subsequent treatment accorded Alvarez was, at its best, unpleasant.²⁴

This episode created a martyr's reputation for Alvarez. Virtually anyone who mentioned him in writing would make some reference to his brutal treatment.²⁵ It was an event which would bring everlasting fame to the merchant.

Over the next few days, the Consul and the Mexican government beseeched each other in correspondence. Alvarez correctly became concerned about the intentions

of the Texans relative to American citizens. As the representative of the American government he had to deal with the Texans whose country had been recognized by the United States. To this end he sought permission to meet with the expedition's leaders. This in turn, made the Governor suspicious.²⁶ Could the American Consul be seeking to inform the Texans of something? Such an amazing request along with countless requests for repeated assurances that the Americans be protected led to a disgruntled reply on September 22, 1841. According to Alvarez, it was his duty to see the approaching Texans. Armijo then withdrew his official recognition of the Consul.²⁷ From the Governor's viewpoint he had eliminated any necessity of Alvarez for leaving town. He could not act in an official capacity when unrecognized. Alvarez even refused the Governor's offer that he join the Mexican camp.²⁸ The idea of keeping Alvarez in Santa Fe, along with others who might have ideas of providing information to the Texans resulted in a circular that prohibited all travel in the direction from which the Texans were coming.²⁹

Meanwhile, those who had enough decided to secretly meet at Abiquiu and leave for California. The Rowland-Workman party was made up of twenty-three Anglos and three Mexicans.³⁰ All were acquaintances of Alvarez, one of whom even asked Alvarez to bribe an official, Don Agustin Duran, for a passport.³¹ Many of the members continued to correspond with Alvarez, thus establishing a New Mexico-California connection. This later developed into profitable

business operations, especially in sheep. Alvarez even received reports from ex-New Mexicans on the progress of the Mexican War in California. As his friend who needed a passport wrote,

And now farwell to you my very much respected friend.
I shall often think of you and your very great exertions
on my behalf both as a friend and in your official
capacity as American Consul.³²

And these were the sentiments of most American travelers in New Mexico. It was a respect well earned.

The California-bound party was able to slip away unnoticed as all the attention centered on San Miguel southeast of Santa Fe. There, the first of the feared Texans struggled into civilization. In an ill-planned, ill-equipped, and ill-directed journey the plains and the Indians provided a much better defense than the ragamuffin militia that met them. A little trickery, such as unkept promises of good treatment, was enough to make them give up their arms. Kept under guard at San Miguel until Armijo, in his finest uniform, could impress them, they were then forced on a treacherous march to El Paso where they received better treatment. Another victory was thus achieved to support the myth of Armijo's military prowess. He could now claim two victories within four years. On both occasions Mexico's northern Department was saved. Due to such distance between Santa Fe and Mexico City, appearance mattered more than reality.

The harried Alvarez scarcely had time to tend to his wounds, much less complain about American rights, as news

of the captive Texans came in. Some Americans and an English citizen were among the prisoners. Even more astonishing was the discovery of a native Mexican called Navarro with the invading party! He was an ex-Senator in the Mexican government.³³ One of the Americans was James Wilkens Kendall, editor of the New Orleans Picayune who had sent Matt Field out west in 1839. Two years later he had come to Santa Fe, but he unfortunately used the Texans as the means to get to New Mexico. Even though he, like the Englishman Thomas Falconer, had the proper passport, Governor Armijo refused to act. Armijo insisted that they remain prisoners with the rest. Undaunted by his close scrape with death, Alvarez sought Kendall's release. Observing the Governor's belligerence, Alvarez protested that the incarceration of American citizens among the Texans was a disgrace to the United States' government.³⁴ Next the Consul got together with Charles Bent and James Magoffin to attempt an extra-legal means of securing Kendall's release. They raised three thousand dollars and offered it to Armijo for the release of the American editor and the Mexican, Navarro, "to shew [sic] that we were not altogether partial to the Americans."³⁵ It was to no avail. Kendall was marched with the rest of the prisoners to Mexico City.

The Texan episode and/or Alvarez's protestations resulted in a critical delay in granting him a passport for the United States.³⁶ The incensed Alvarez was forced to wait nearly a month. Armijo worried that other Texans,

possibly a second force, heading toward Santa Fe. An extension of his order forbidding travel toward the Southeast proved to be Alvarez' problem. No doubt the Consul was anxious to get to the States. He had a list of complaints for which the American government could justifiably demand reparations. After all, the United States Consul had been physically abused and robbed. The acts in this case were much more blatant than those of the 1837 revolt. Any delay, insofar as Alvarez was concerned, would only serve to prove his point, especially with the approaching winter season.

On September 28, the Governor reaffirmed his earlier decree on travel and refused Alvarez's petition to rescind the order.³⁷ On October 1, Alvarez received an answer to another of his petitions stating that neither he nor any other foreigner was allowed to leave New Mexico.³⁸ This served to reiterate Armijo's orders of September 23 and 28 with an extension prohibiting travel in any direction. It also indicated the urgency with which Alvarez wanted to leave. Within a week after the Texans arrived, he was ready to go. But the Consul was allowed to "cool his heels" more than a month to collect his thoughts. On October 25, 1841, presumably when Armijo realized that no new Texan threat was developing, Alvarez and fifteen Americans received their passport.³⁹

Less the Governor change his mind or the weather become nasty, the Alvarez party left Santa Fe the next day.⁴⁰ The men bypassed Bent's Fort on the upper Arkansas River

and took the hazardous Cimarron cut-off. The party then split with five members heading down the Arkansas River and four others going ahead. Alvarez took a gamble crossing the plains at such a late date. And it was a risk he lost as he had a second scrape with death.

The winter snows caught up with the small Alvarez party near Council Grove at Cotton Wood Creek. The party stopped in three feet of snow but were unable to keep a fire going. Under such dire circumstances, they suffered their first casualty. John Richmire, who was one of the four men who had gone ahead, froze to death four miles from the camp.⁴¹ By then the main body caught up with the other three men. Two of the men were so badly frozen and sick, Alvarez decided to leave them with one healthy man while the rest struck out for aid from the Missouri settlements. They made it to Independence on December 15. By the 17th help was on the way back to Council Grove. Unfortunately, another man died before the rescuers arrived.⁴² Not one of the group avoided frost-bite. Some of the survivors suffered severely, and only the insistence of Alvarez that everyone keep moving, saved the remainder.⁴³

The Consul later tallied his losses to the total of \$8,210. Such a tally proved him to be something more than a poor man. Taking a trip for the primary purpose of presenting a formal complaint to the U.S. government during an inclement season would not necessitate a lot of baggage. Yet Alvarez lost two riding horses, one buffalo horse,

"two Jacks of superior size and breed," thirty-six mules, one gun and other utensils.⁴⁴ No wonder some of the party tried to make better time!

Some of the items that did reach the United States were the Consul's correspondence. Before leaving Santa Fe he collected all his official papers. After his safe arrival in Missouri he dashed off a letter to Secretary of State Daniel Webster in which he informed his superior of his arrival and plans to "proceed to the seat of government" and related the injuries suffered by United States' citizens in New Mexico. Alvarez was sending a narrative "nearly agreeing with the facts" for the Department's inspection. A statement signed by American residents of New Mexico would be presented at a personal interview. The meeting was delayed until "after some repose which is necessary to recruit my health impaired by a troublesome journey."⁴⁵ A narrative, statement, and personal interview would not suffice. Actually, Webster had no way to predict what his intelligent, if wordy, Consul had in store for him. The narrative was a thirty-two page memorial meticulously footnoted with the original documents attached. The letters written in Spanish were provided with English translations. In all there were over sixty letters bearing out the veracity of the memorial.⁴⁶ The original document were later returned at Alvarez's request, to be replaced with his own hand-written copies.⁴⁷ The impressive memorial, one of the most amazing historical documents to be written at that time, did not suffice. The Consul also

wanted to remonstrate to Congress. Toward that end he collected letters of introduction, hopefully to meet the Speaker of the House, John White, and even persuade someone to use their "aid and influence with Mr. Clay and other friends."⁴⁸

By February, 1842, Alvarez was in Washington to ask Webster what the Department planned to do about the incidents contained within the memorial.⁴⁹ The State Department replied that Waddy Thompson, recently appointed Minister to Mexico, would be instructed personally "to make proper representations to that government" before he left for Mexico.⁵⁰

A couple of weeks later Alvarez entered a second petition on his own behalf. He reiterated the complaint of the attempted assassination upon himself and emphasized the outrage by claiming the Mexican government had recognized him as the United States Consul. The local Mexican authorities did nothing by way of reparations or apologies. For this the Spaniard asked for an indemnity of \$2,500.00. As payment for the "arbitrary detention" which caused the deaths of two men, twelve thousand dollars would do. Alvarez felt his detention, or arrest, as he claimed, from September 16 to October 25 was worth five thousand dollars and finally, he wanted \$8,200.00 for his losses on the trail.⁵¹ This amazing petition did not in the least faze Webster. His prompt reply the next day touched off the question of Alvarez's proper citizenship, a question which the Consul was allowed to graciously withdraw.⁵²

The petition was given much less of a reception than the memorial presented on behalf of the American residents in New Mexico. In a succinct and brisk document demonstrating the stern New England mettle for which Webster was famous, Alvarez was told his lack of U.S. citizenship prevented the United States from seeking reparations of the Mexican government on his behalf. And, because he was never granted an exequatur, "there cannot, for the present at least, be anything done in your behalf."⁵³

Outside of his heroics and diplomatic maneuverings in Washington this was a significant trip. As a result of his recent problems Alvarez formed a logical conclusion, which was to apply for U.S. citizenship. On April 9, 1846 in the St. Louis Court of Common Pleas he became an United States citizen.⁵⁴ There were two obvious reasons for petitioning for naturalization: first, Governor Armijo's hesitancy in answering his request for personal protection because the Consul was a Mexican citizen;⁵⁴ second, Webster's reasoning that he could do nothing because Alvarez was not an American citizen.⁵⁶

Alvarez and his two witnesses Theodore Papin, relative of Alvarez's old boss P.D. Papin, and Pascal L. Cerri one of the charter members of the Papin Company, had to bend the facts to gain the coveted citizenship for Alvarez. They certified that Alvarez resided in the United States for "at least five years, and in the State of Missouri at least one year, immediately preceding this application." This, of course was untrue. It took almost a month before

Alvarez worded a two sentence letter informing Webster of his official naturalization and saying that "I leave tomorrow."⁵⁷ Rancor was still evident over the appreciation he received for his Consular efforts.

The people on whose behalf Alvarez had risked his life were as disgusted as he. In a sense the image of the American government for that time period has ever since suffered for its ingratitude. Kendall, like other contemporary writers, made the portrait immortal when he wrote in his Narrative of the Texan-Santa Fe Expedition that Alvarez barely escaped with his life for his efforts, yet the United States government did nothing in his behalf.⁵⁸

1. Lavender, Bent's Fort, p. 210; Josiah Greeg, Commerce of the Prairies, Max Moorhead, (ed) (Norman; University of Oklahoma Press, 1954) p. 162. Moorhead agrees with David Lavender by including William Workman and John Rowland as Commissioners of Texas in fn. 12, p. 162.
2. Lavender, Bent's Fort, p. 205-6. Lavender's citation on the eventual outcome of the episode is wrong (fn. 3, p. 425). The correct citation is Alvarez to Secretary of State, July 1, 1843 (not December 18), Consular Dispatches. Also, Memorial, p. 8; and Alvarez to Guadalupe Miranda, March 12, 1841, RI 187, Ritch Papers. The last indicates that Alvarez had a little more success in pursuing the matter through less threatening channels. Alvarez is thanking Armijo "for his goodness" in getting the assassins of Daley retried by the Supreme Court.
3. Lavender, Bent's Fort, p. 210.
4. Thomas Rowland to Alvarez, October 26, 1841, no. 262, Read Collection.
5. See Chapter II, 3rd page.
6. Charles Bent to Alvarez, February 19, 1841, no. 47, Read Collection.
7. Bent to Alvarez, February 25, 1841, no. 48, Read Collection and Bent to Alvarez, February 19, 1841, no. 47, Read Collection.
8. Bent to Alvarez, February 25, 1841, no. 48, Read Collection.
9. Bent to Alvarez, February 26, 1841, no. 49, Read Collection.
10. Bent to Alvarez, March 22, 1841, no. 51, Read Collection. This whole affair is briefly described in Lavender, Bent's Fort, p. 210-11.
11. Lavender, p. 215.
12. Bent to Alvarez, January 16, 1841, no. 44, Read Collection. Thomas Falconer claimed that Armijo knew as early as March 17, 1841. The Governor received word, reasons Falconer, from General Arista who was a Mexican agent in Texas. Arista was informed of the expedition's departure. Thomas Falconer, Letters and Notes On the Texan-Santa Fé Expedition, 1841-42 F.W. Hodge, (ed) (Chicago; The Rio Grande Press, Inc., 1963) p. 36.
13. Memorial, p. 20-1.

14. Some of these occasions are recorded in the following chapter.

15. Daniel Tyler, "Gringo Views of Governor Manuel Armijo," New Mexico Historical Review, (Vol. 45, January, 1970), p. 29. There were some lighter moments such as a letter Alvarez received from Bent in January 1841. Alvarez's friend related that Padre Martinez reported that the Texans were in California. Bent wondered how they got there and that Martinez should be made "Pope for his geographical knowledge." Bent to Alvarez, January 30, 1841, no. 46, Read Collection.

16. Memorial, p. 21; Alvarez to Miranda, September 14, 1841, frame 1340, reel 29, MANM; A copy attached to the Memorial is numbered "26". Here, Alvarez is chronologically wrong. If as the Memorial implies, he met and wrote to Armijo after the arrival of the deserters the letter would have been written on September 15, not September 14. And, as the letter indicates he wrote a day later it must have been written on September 16.

17. Alvarez to Miranda, September 14, 1841, MANM.

18. Miranda to Alvarez, September 14, 1841, no. 214, Read Collection. A copy attached to the Memorial is lettered "V".

19. Memorial, p. 21.

20. Alvarez to Miranda, September 15, 1841, frames 1342-4, MANM.

21. Merchants to Webster, September 16, 1841, a copy attached to the Memorial is lettered "Z".

22. Memorial, p. 23.

23. Quoted from Gregg, Commerce of the Prairies, p. 163.

24. This well chronicled event can be found with minor variance to detail in myriad accounts. A sampling includes Alvarez, Memorial to Secretary of State Daniel Webster, p. 19-24; Josiah Gregg, Commerce of the Prairies, p. 161-2; and George Wilkins Kendall, Narrative of the Texan-Santa Fe Expedition, Vol. I, p. 246.

25. James Josiah Webb, Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade 1844-1847, Southwest Historical Series, Vol. I, edited by Ralph P. Bieber (Glendale; The Arthur H. Clark Col, 1931) p. 263. Webb writes a few years after the fact and demonstrates how fast the reputation was established. Recent histories of the period also help to perpetuate the incident. For example, see Lavender p. 216.

26. Memorial, p. 22.
27. Miranda to Alvarez, September 22, 1841, no. 217, Read Collection.
28. Tyler, "Gringo Views," NMHR, p. 31.
29. Miranda to Alvarez, September 23, 1841, no. 218, Read Collection.
30. LeRoy R. and Ann W. Hafen, The Old Spanish Trail; Santa Fé to Los Angeles, The Far West and The Rockies Historical Series, 1820-1875, Vol. I, (Glendale; The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1954) p. 207-8.
31. Dr. J.H. Lyman to Alvarez, August 8, 1841, Read Collection.
32. Ibid.
33. Falconer, Letters and Notes, p. 16-7 and 34.
34. Lavender, p. 217. Lavender claims that Kendall was the only American citizen while Alvarez (Memorial, p. 28) intimates there were more.
35. Memorial, p. 28.
36. Miranda to Alvarez, October 1, 1841, no. 221, Read Collection; and Gregg, Commerce of the Prairies, p. 163.
37. Miranda to Alvarez, September 28, 1841, no. 219, Read Collection.
38. Miranda to Alvarez, October 1, 1841, no. 221, Read Collection.
39. Manuel Armijo, Passport for Alvarez and fifteen Americans, October 25, 1841, no. 18, Read Collection.
40. Memorial, p. 30.
41. Memorial, p. 30-2.
42. Ibid.
43. Gregg, Commerce, p. 163; and Alvarez to Webster, March 2, 1842, Consular Despatches.
44. Alvarez to Webster, March 2, 1842, Consular Despatches.
45. Alvarez to Webster, December 15, 1841, Consular Despatches.
46. Memorial.

47. Alvarez to Webster, February 13, 1842, Consular Despatches; Webster to Alvarez, February 16, 1842, Read Collection; and Alvarez to Webster, February 23, 1842, Consular Despatches.
48. John Ryland to John White, Speaker of the House, December 19, 1841, no. 267, Read Collection; and William Boggs to General Leslie Z. Combs, December 28, 1841, no. 94, Read Collection.
49. Alvarez to Webster, February 13, 1842, Consular Despatches.
50. Webster to Alvarez, February, 16, 1842, no. 307, Read Collection.
51. Alvarez to Webster, March 2, 1842, Consular Despatches.
52. Webster to Alvarez, March 3, 1842, no. 308, Read Collection; Alvarez to Webster, March 4, 1842, Consular Despatches; and Webster to Alvarez, March 4, 1842, no. 309, Read Collection. See Chapter II on this incident.
53. Webster to Alvarez, March 4, 1842, no. 309, Read Collection.
54. Official certificate attesting to Alvarez's naturalization, no. 5, Read Collection.
55. Jorge Ramirez to Alvarez, August 4, 1841, no. 254, Read Collection.
56. Webster to Alvarez, February 16, 1842, no. 307, Read Collection.
57. Alvarez to Webster, May 4, 1842, Consular Despatches.
58. Kendall, Narratives, p. 246.

Chapter V

Merchant and Consul; A Peculiar Combination?

Neither lack of recognition, citizenship problems nor antagonistic relations prevented Alvarez from actively performing his duties as United States Consul. He occupied a strategic position and, even though contrary to his instructions,¹ he was not about to continue the inactive tradition of his predecessors. To be sure, his activities were limited so that he would not make waves. This was especially true before the incidents of September 1841.

As early as November 1841 Alvarez participated in a common form of frontier justice, as practiced by merchants. The two litigants were Powell, Lamont and Company, traders between Chihuahua and Missouri, and Philip W. Thompson, a Missouri resident and trader in the Santa Fe trade. Attorney David Waldo, representing Powell and Company, brought suit against Thompson, who represented himself, for the sum of eight thousand dollars. After filing complaints and answers before Louis Robidoux, the first alcalde of Santa Fé, in the court de primera Instancia,

both sides came to an informal agreement to submit the case to arbitration. To this end David Waldo petitioned Robidoux, "expressing full confidence in the qualifications of Louis Lee and Manual Alvarez, merchants in this city, the parties have mutually agreed to name said Lee and Alvarez as arbitrators." On November 5, three days after the petition, Alvarez and Lee appeared before Robidoux and accepted the responsibility. The arbitrators were given eight days, all the pertinent documents, and subpoena powers. They decided not to be bound "to the rules of law" which was agreed to by the principals. Having taken testimony from the litigants and reviewing fifteen pieces of documentary evidence, Alvarez and Lee ordered P.W. Thompson to pay the Powell Company \$6,149.84. This order was accepted by Robidoux, Thompson and Waldo.²

Thompson, however, soon had trouble paying the award. Obviously, the decision was not to his liking, and a prior agreement that a \$8,000.00 fine should be imposed if either litigant appeal prevented that avenue of redress. The result was that Thompson hired H. Leonard, an attorney from Fayette, Missouri to bring suit against an involved third party.³ Leonard found it difficult to obtain evidence from Missouri and decided to form commissions in Santa Fe and Chihuahua to solicit information pertinent to the case. At the suggestion of a colleague the barister decided to locate the commission in Alvarez's store in Santa Fe.⁴ Leonard travelled to Santa Fe and took depositions at the Consul's store on July 27, 1840.⁵

Such legal functions were a fairly low-keyed and safe activity for Alvarez. His involvement indicated the feelings of "experience and integraty [sic]" others had of him.⁶

Eventually, Alvarez later attempted to represent foreigners in conflict with native New Mexicans. Of no little aid was his friend Charles Bent who kept him constantly informed of events in the north and along the Santa Fé Trail. Bent presented Alvarez with some petty problems. Once, Bent located horses stolen by Indians who then traded them to New Mexicans. He asked if he could retain legal possession of his original property. Alvarez replied negatively on behalf of the New Mexican government and suggested that Bent take better care of his livestock.⁷ In time, Alvarez became involved in non-Anglo affairs. Murders, an increasingly biased taxation of foreign goods, and a jaundiced sense of justice made Alvarez an active Consul.

The murders started with the death of Sermon Nash, at the hands of William Langford. At Bent's request Alvarez presented a petition to Governor Armijo to have the murderer brought to trial. Asking the local government to try a foreigner was the kind of activity which created no problems. Besides, Langford was a "hardened villian [sic] destitute of all feeling of humanity" with "not the least remorse of conscience for the violent outrage he has committed" and, if freed, "he is a man capable of again committing murder nearly to satisfy his inadinant [sic]

thirst for blood."⁸ The Governor would have no trouble bringing such a man to trial.

Nash was not the only victim of a violent death. From Alvarez's appointment until the Texan expedition such killings mounted with startling regularity. The murders of such men as Daley, Joseph Pulesepher, Joseph Bragaux, the deaf and dumb Frances Lacompte and, mentioned almost in passing, a Mormon killed near Taos did not involve American culprits but local Mexicans.⁹ Alvarez, if not prodded into action by his own conscience, was pushed by the insistence of the American residents and merchants. It seemed as though the responsible parties were never punished. Writing about a murder near Mora, Bent declared that it was the fourth such occurrence "within the last few years," and no perpetrators had been punished.¹⁰ Alvarez brought up such issues with the government and in some cases, had to intervene when certain Americans decided to take things into their own hands. A good example is Dryden's activities after the Daley murder.¹¹

Unsolved homicides were not the only problems in which Alvarez became concerned. Among other things he was entrusted with the collection of goods that were stolen from two Americans. Since the crime was committed a couple of years previously, the merchandise had somehow gravitated into the hands of the Juez de Paz of Mora, the man with whom Alvarez had to deal.¹²

Another episode very typical of the kind of activity in which the Consul was involved had to do with Doctor

J.H. Lyman, a New Englander traveling to Chihuahua in search of better health. In Santa Fé, Lyman had been solicited for a \$900.00 loan by Francis Valentine Tayon, of St. Louis. Tayon agreed to repay the loan with a hundred dollar interest fee within a day at Taos. Lyman however, did not want to travel to Taos from Santa Fé and proposed that Tayon repay the original amount of \$900.00 in the capital city. To this end Tayon borrowed \$900.00 from Stephen Lee. With the money in hand, Lyman continued on his trip into the interior of Mexico.

Meanwhile, Lee discovered that Tayon could not pay his debt and complained to Governor Armijo who, in turn, had Lyman detained at Algodones, forty miles south of Santa Fé.¹³ Alvarez explained Dr. Lyman's innocence to Governor Armijo who ordered the American to be released. Lyman was not told of the favorable order. Instead, the local Juez de Paz, Antonio de Montoya, his secretary, and Armijo's messenger forged an order whereby Lyman was to be transferred to Santa Fe. By this time the poor prisoner expected the worst and decided to procure his release by offering Montoya a bribe. The three Mexican officials accepted \$50.00 then demanded \$200.00 more. This Lyman stoutly refused. Soon thereafter a friend told the Doctor about Armijo's order and Montoya's forgery. Angered, Lyman determined to return to Santa Fé and "demand justice."¹⁴

With Alvarez, Lyman took his complaint to the Governor. In a compromise the Doctor's bribe money was returned along with the expenses incurred in his delay. Montoya's

secretary also was to be held in irons for one month. Although the money was returned, no punishment was meted out to the implicated officials.¹⁵ Consequently Lyman wrote that he was "satisfied that no Americans can ever attain justice in any court here under the influence of Governor Armijo", and as proof, pointed to "the different Americans assassinated here within the past two or three years, whose murderers, are not punished."¹⁶ Less than a year later, Lyman left New Mexico as a member of the Rowland-Workman party.

The tax issue proved to be a big point of conflict between the New Mexican officials and Alvarez. In one case Alvarez exchanged a number of letters concerning the intended marriage of an American man to a local girl at San Miguel. Upon finding out the local prelate charged the groom \$30.00 above the normal fee, the Consul immediately confronted the Governor and Vicar Don Juan Felipe Ortiz on behalf of the groom. This acrimonious controversy ended in favor of the groom who paid the usual marriage fee.¹⁷

A marriage fee was a small matter when compared to the customs taxes. Such levies attracted Alvarez' attention in two ways; as a merchant he had a financial stake and, as Consul, he had a diplomatic interest. Alvarez applied his most intense effort with urgent taxes. As the tax was arbitrarily set by the Governor, there were abuses. In 1839, for example, Armijo decided to tax each incoming wagon \$500.00. Alvarez could accept this. Besides,

the Americans quickly learned the virtue of packing their loads on as few wagons as possible. However, when only the Americans were required to pay the tax, the Consul acted to neutralize this unfair economic advantage granted to the Chihuahua City merchants.¹⁸ Alvarez complained to Powhatan Ellis and presented to Armijo a petition signed by the merchants.¹⁹ The petition was more in line with an unrecognized Consul than direct official action. Technically, Alvarez believed such laws in violation of the ninth Article of the current treaty between the governments.²⁰ He saw Armijo's actions as unprincipled even though he could understand the competitive edge the Governor was trying to give his own people. Indeed, one historian believes the American traders were far better off because they were not paying what the Mexican law required.²¹ Nonetheless, the American merchants were incensed by the double standard and their emotion was reflected in Alvarez's actions. To compete at a disadvantage was not accepted. It hurt business.²² Months later the Governor relented and taxed all merchants alike, even though occurrences continued where Americans were targets of unequal tax levies.²³ Alvarez thought that the Governor was determined to use taxation "to draw from the market the competition of the industrious and enterprising citizens of the United States."²⁴

Another important factor that Alvarez served was passing information of Indian activity on to Armijo. Such

information usually came by way of Bent's Fort and included advice that the suspicious Governor rarely followed. Early in 1841 Alvarez received reports that the Plains Indians were restless because they believed the Mexicans desired to enslave them. Some of the tribes, including the Arapaho, Sioux, and Comanche had a "big powwow on the Arkansas" River to determine what to do about the Mexicans.²⁵

Some Arapahoes even travelled to Taos to trade one horse in exchange for each Arapaho prisoner released. Charles Bent advised that the offer be accepted. Otherwise, the Mexicans would "repent."²⁶ A month later Bent reported his fear that the Arapahoes might have banded with Comanches. Bent was worried, especially when the Indians threatened war if their people were not returned. With a thousand lodges erected on the Arkansas and the alliance between the Cheyenne and Comanche behind the cause, Bent took the threats seriously.²⁷

Alvarez passed all this information on to Armijo. The Governor questioned Bent's sentiment with the Indians.²⁸ The following month Alvarez received a despatch from Bent who was crossing the prairie. Camped on the Animas River were the Arapahoes, replete with Spanish scalps and ten stolen horses. Bent feared an eventual attack on San Miguel.²⁹

The consequence of Alvarez's participation in the Indian problems was frustration over the Governor's lack of attention to the matter. Such chagrin was nothing

considering the total of Alvarez's activities, not to mention the events surrounding the Texas-Santa Fé expedition. Also, claims were still outstanding for debts attributed to the 1837 Revolt. All this effort went for naught as Alvarez returned to New Mexico a naturalized American citizen in 1842. This was especially so after being completely denied any encouragement by Secretary Webster. It was no wonder that he began to put a little less emphasis on being a U.S. Consul and more effort into his business profession.

Alvarez found the climate in New Mexico unchanged. Some accused murderers of Americans were released, and in October he was visited by an enraged Armijo. The Governor lost some goods worth eighteen to twenty thousand dollars in the Missouri River.³⁰ The incident, indicating Armijo's deep involvement in the trade, occurred while the goods were in transit from St. Louis to Independence on the steam boat Lebanon. Armijo accused Alvarez of causing the loss and threatened his life.³¹

The Consul's friend in Taos also did not escape the wrath of the locals. Bent, sued for \$800.00, went to court unsuccessfully, and was not allowed an appeal. He was jailed for refusing to pay. The ugly mood of the populace convinced him to change his mind. After his release from jail he fled to his Fort on the Arkansas. One of his employees had arrived with more than enough money for the suit. Alvarez later wrote that while he could not prevent what happened his pleas did avoid

a more unpleasant situation.³² These incidents, plus the recurring rumors of a new Texan invasion, made the Consul decide to leave on another trip.³³ Besides, he had some unfinished business to attend. He had been requested to check about the reparations of 1837 and 1841. Charles Bent spread word that the American government would pay all claims and then collect from Mexico.³⁴ Alvarez knew nothing of this solution and was anxious to find out officially what, if anything, had been resolved.³⁵

By this time, the profit margin had fallen in the northern Mexican commerce. Such a condition directly influenced Alvarez. As Consul he was in a position to do something to mitigate the effect of the decline. So a trip east would have a three-fold mission. He could make official representations, purchase merchandise for his store, and get away from the vindictive Armijo.

Other business was liquor running, the Texans, and import duties. Because of the very real and harsh consequences of trading alcohol to the Indians, the federal government outlawed shipping it across the prairie. Due to "the vigilance [sic] of our agents" very little of the "ardent spirits" was hauled in 1843. This was of no avail due to the production of Taos "lightning" and Mexican traders running a business in alcohol above Bent's Fort. Alvarez proposed to the State Department that it would be to the advantage of all concerned if an agreement could be made between the United States and Mexico in which such trade was controlled.³⁶

Alvarez received a first hand example of the Texan problem when he met Colonel Jacob Snively and one hundred eighty men at the Arkansas Crossing. The Texans were waiting for a west bound caravan under the protection of Captain Cook of the United States Army. As soon as the caravan crossed the Arkansas into Mexican territory, it no longer had the benefit of the Captain's protection. Snively waited to take advantage of the opportunity. Only the arrival of Armijo and his troops would avert the Texans' plans for an ambush. None of this met Alvarez approval because he felt such activity served only to hurt the trade. This particular caravan was a good example as it was composed equally of Mexican and American goods and people. Again Alvarez opined that something should be done.³⁷

There was another problem crucial to the many merchants participating in the overland international trade. For goods imported to the United States and transhipped via the Santa Fé Trail to Mexico, the merchants had to pay two duties. Even though the goods were never removed from the original packages, import duties were required at the entry ports of both the United States and Mexico. When contrasted to transshipment by boat, which did not include a U.S. import duty, the Santa Fe traders felt they were being unjustly treated. The sea trade had to pay but one duty. Needless to say, the solution was to eliminate the added tariff for the Santa Fé trade. This was attempted on three different occasions in the

form of the Draw Back Bill.³⁸ Despite the acute interest of Alvarez and others on each occasion, the Bill met defeat in the House of Representatives following passage in the Senate. It was defeated because the House attached "it with some Canadian measure."³⁹

In marshalling his rationale in favor of the Bill, Alvarez was able to relate it to the "big picture." Aside from the benefits of personal profits, such a Bill would increase trade "to about two millions of dollars annually, giving employment to from eight hundred to one thousand wagons." Such figures meant more jobs in the Mississippi Valley. Diplomatically, the increased trade would draw northern Mexico under United States' influence thus balancing the British influence in Southern Mexico while decreasing the same. If nothing else, such huge caravans required as much as fifteen hundred men which in itself would pacify the Indians.⁴⁰

Official matters aside, Alvarez was unexpectedly and pleasantly delayed from returning to Santa Fé when President Santa Anna closed all northern ports of entry to Mexico in August. Foreigners, which Alvarez was in blood and on paper, were now prohibited from engaging in retail commerce. Alvarez decided to go to Europe, especially Spain, where he would visit his family. He went to Spain via England and France, where at Bayona before the Spanish Consul, Don Francisco de Hormaeche, he made his last Will and Testament. Josiah Gregg, among others kept Alvarez abreast of events at home. The Spaniard combined

business with pleasure by purchasing valued European items for his store. Unfortunately, Santa Anna's closure created problems since no one was certain when Mexico's port of entries would open. In fact, one of Alvarez's shipments was delayed under the care of Thomas H. Larkin of St. Louis "owing to the Break in the Canal."⁴² Gregg wrote to Alvarez in Paris expressing a possibility of revolution in Mexico while he saw no hope for the Draw Back Bill.⁴³ By June 1844 the ports were opened, and Alvarez procured a passport issued in the name of Secretary of State John C. Calhoun and returned to New Mexico.⁴⁴

A year later, almost to the day, Alvarez made another trip. Upon his arrival in Missouri he learned of the recent passage of the Draw Back Bill. Joyfully, he wrote James Buchanan his approval and as a result decided to appoint "Jeremiah" Houghton, a resident of Taos, temporary Consul in his absence. The appointment was justified "by virtue of my appointment" in 1839 and that "under the provisions of the late law [the Draw Back], many merchants have purchased goods and are on their way to New Mexico. To avoid any fear that his "absence from Santa Fé might prejudice interests" the appointment was necessary. Besides, Alvarez planned to be away only a couple of months.⁴⁵

Between trips east, Alvarez and Charles Bent demonstrated where their loyalties lay as they continued to use their many contacts out of Bent's Fort and along the Santa Fé Trail to keep Governor Armijo informed of

Indian and, more importantly, Texan raiding parties. Texas seemed to be extremely bitter over the treatment the survivors of the Texan-Santa Fé expedition had received from the Mexican authorities. This was especially augmented by the biased publicity that emerged from the event; George Wilkins Kendall and Thomas Falconer each wrote first hand anti-Mexican accounts of the affair. The result was continued Texan raids on outlying New Mexican settlements and as Alvarez reported, a concerted effort to cripple New Mexican trade along the Santa Fé Trail. One such Texan effort was avoided when the Cheyenne runners of William Bent, Charles Bent's half-brother, kept Bent's Fort informed of "Lone Star" activity along the Arkansas River. Ceran St. Vrain relayed the information from the fort to Charles Bent in Taos who, in turn, passed the intelligence to Alvarez in Santa Fé. From Alvarez, then, the Mexican traders had a good idez of what was happening along the Santa Fé Trail. One such warning from Charles Bent read that "thare [sic] are people of the single star on the lookout for game on the plains." This particular warning resulted in many Mexican traders not risking the trail that year.⁴⁶ The native traders simply let American traders transport their goods. The Texans were less inclined to torment the Americans. Thus the Bent's Fort-Santa Fé network of communication contributed to the preservation of the Santa Fé trade.

By 1846, fifty-two year old Manuel Alvarez had lived a full life. There were many events over which he could

have easily reminisced. And the future held even bigger events. War was coming between the United States and Mexico. As early as January 7, 1843 Charles Bent sent a note, along with a sheaf of newspapers, to Alvarez in which he said, "you will see that there is a prospect of war." Governor Armijo also shared in this information since Bent asked Alvarez to let "the big man" see the papers "as it may please him to see" what is written about him.⁴⁷ On January 24, 1845, sixteen months before the outbreak of war, Alvarez received another letter from Bent in which he conveyed that he sorrowed over the election of James K. Polk because he was "fearful that this election will cause difficulty between this and our country."⁴⁸ On July 16, 1845 a letter from a merchant friend, Sam Wethered Jr., arrived in Santa Fé telling Alvarez that seventy thousand pounds of Wethered's freight on thirteen or fourteen wagons was delayed at Independence until September 1. The reason, said Wethered, was "to learn all the particulars as respects Mexico and the United States."⁴⁹ The storm was brewing, and its repercussions were beginning to be felt.

In November Alvarez received information about another problem that seemed to be developing, reflecting, and contributing to a growing anxiety over Anglo designs on New Mexico. Joab Houghton, Alvarez's recent replacement, and a couple of his American friends seemed to be making a political power play. They were threatening to place the country and courts under their control. Houghton and his partners had some "clout" as evidenced by the fact

that they were able to remove the Taos prefect from office in favor of one of their own choice. They achieved the same in Rio Arriba and were gaining influence over more of the American community. These developments became so startling that Alvarez received an urgent warning from Theodore Wheaton, a veteran of the Santa Fé Trail, that Houghton's people were on their way to Santa Fé. Alvarez was asked to inform the governor and John Dryden, an ally in opposition to the Houghton group, because,

[Now] it may be some time before Congress legislates for this country and during this time we shall suffer severely both as to our public and private interests if we cannot stop this pernicious influence...

Wheaton felt the only method to stop this northern Anglo movement was to do it legally through an alliance between the top Americans and Mexicans "who are disposed to see the country prosper." If nothing was done, Wheaton felt, Houghton would represent "worse oppression than that under Armijo."⁵⁰ In light of such brash politics it is no wonder that Padre José Antonio Martínez of Taos delivered Sunday sermons denouncing annexation, or that Charles Bent petitioned the United States Consul to assure his protection under the Mexican government.⁵¹

On a more private level Alvarez was still able to oversee his business affairs. Due to his many trips, the Texan invasion, and other distractions, Alvarez did not have time to partake in any stock raising ventures on his Ocaté Grant, which had since fallen into disuse. On December 5, 1845 Governor Armijo granted a renewal,

demonstrating "the big man" as something more than many biased American writers were prone to depict.⁵² Indeed, as the above Houghton controversy illustrates, there were Americans who preferred his rule to that of their fellows. No doubt too, the Governor was aware of the many services he received from these enterprising Americans, not the least of which was a supply of coffee.

Just before United States occupation, New Mexico was a myriad of factions, and Alvarez seemed to fit them all. In the face of somewhat harsh realities Mexico's northern department did not split along racial lines. When news of General Mariano Paredes' rise to power in Mexico City reached New Mexico, Charles Bent expressed to Alvarez that war would break out "since Parrades [sic] has come to power," and that "we should be prepared because if Martinez is in favor in Mexico Armijo must fall, as he is no friend of the latter."⁵³ Combined with the above problems was one to which everyone was opposed, that of possible Texas invasion. Suspicion of Texas was the one unifying factor of the New Mexican populace. Apprehension of such invasion had developed into a suspicion of Anglos in general. Charles Bent's spy system still warned of Texans on the prowl. Rumors were once again working many locals into a frenzied state. Such fears were largely after the fact however, as Anglo influence on the Santa Fé Trail already had taken its effect on Northern Mexico's sovereignty. By the 1840's half of the Santa Fé trade caravans were owned by citizens of Santa Fé,

many of whom were educated in the United States.⁵⁴

Under these conditions Alvarez kept busy in his official capacity. Once again Americans feared for their lives and property. On May 3, 1846 their anxiety was verified when Alvarez received the startling news from Taos that George Bent, brother of Charles, and Frank Blair had been attacked by a mob of Taoseños the previous day. Witnesses to the incident were two of Padre Martinez's brothers, one the newly elected justice. Since none of the attackers were arrested, the American community demanded justice from Armijo, and Alvarez presented these wishes to the Governor. Charles Bent sent a message to Alvarez to "tell the governor as his own supreme authority is at stake here."⁵⁵ Ensuing reports indicated that Blair was left for dead with gashes on his head. Charles Bent arranged for guards in front of George's house where George and Blair were being attended. On May 5 Alvarez received assurances from Juan Bautista Vigil y Alarid, Secretary of Government, that the "disagradables seriosos acaeridos [sic] en Taos" were being investigated.⁵⁶ The offenders were indeed incarcerated, only to escape on June 1.

After news of the pending U.S. invasion reached Santa Fé via traders on June 26, a mob formed in the plaza listening to inflammatory speeches. As heads got hotter Alvarez probably recalled the mob that had attacked him during the Texan invasion. Once again the uproar was stopped by the local government, this time by order of

Governor Armijo.⁵⁷

In spite of this activity, Alvarez watched over his business and continued with his daily life. One of the more interesting pieces of business was his supervision of the sale of goods for a friend. The goods came to Santa Fé in a wagon after Alvarez had received a request and instructions in the mail from R.G. Woods, on behalf of Woods, Langford and Company. Alvarez had been recommended to Woods as the best man to handle sale of the goods. Upon the death of the wagon master on the trail, Woods did not feel confident enough to trust the business acumen of the man left in charge, the younger brother of Woods' partner. Woods wrote Alvarez to take charge upon the arrival of the wagon "as he [young Langford] cannot have the same knowledge treating the matter [of sale] that you have."⁵⁸ As it turned out Alvarez did not confront Langford because the young man died on the trail.

Another piece of business was a request from an old friend in the trading business, Josiah Gregg. Gregg, a veteran of the plains, wrote a book called Commerce of the Prairies in which he had nothing good to say about Governor Armijo. With failing health Gregg felt another trip across the plains would be his cure-all. The only problem was how Governor Armijo would treat him in Santa Fé. To this end Gregg wrote his "dear friend" Don Manuel Alvarez "to 'feel the pulse' of our friend the governor and others perhaps, and see if you can gather from them, how I will be received."⁵⁹ Apparently the prospective

welcoming party was not to Gregg's liking as he next wrote Alvarez from San Antonio, Texas.

Meanwhile, Alvarez found time to raise a hundred head of cattle on the Ocaté Grant. Two of his friends, David Waldo and John Rowland, were of the opinion that Alvarez's interest in his rancho was due to the expectation that New Mexico would soon be under the United States Government.⁶⁰ If that was indeed the case, the venture did not work out. The United States Government initially disallowed his claim.

Probably the most gruesome event with which Alvarez dealt with was the murder of an American named Crombeck by some Jicarilla Apache Indians. The incident was pressed on Alvarez by Charles Bent because the northern authorities seemed to take no interest in the death of one foreigner, especially under the prevailing circumstances. Six of the Indians were brought into Taos with the corpse. It "was terribly mangled" with the skull smashed and "the face one third broader" than natural. Thanks to a man named Luís Baca, who happened upon the murder site, a vivid description of the crime was available.⁶¹

Bent wanted five of the Indians held hostage while the sixth would be sent out to bring in the two "murderers" who had not been caught. Instead, the authorities released four and kept two for the two who were still at large. Bent complained that the final two would be allowed to escape. He pleaded with Alvarez to get an order to have the accused taken to Santa Fé for trial. Nothing ever

came of Bent's protestations even though Alvarez received an official reply from Juan Bautista Vigil that Armijo had taken steps to punish the Jicarillas involved in the killing of Crombeck.⁶²

On April 25, 1846 Mexican troops crossed the Río Grande at Matamoros and killed or wounded sixteen American soldiers under General Zachary Taylor. Although tenuous, because this was just such an incident he wanted, President Polk used the Matamoros incident as an excuse to go to war with Mexico. President Polk's war message was delivered to Congress on May 11, 1846. Two days later the legislators formally declared war. Soon thereafter U.S. Consul Alvarez received a "Confidential Circular" from the Secretary of State, James Buchanan, which in part stated:

It is our interest...that Mexico should be an independent and powerful Republic, and that our relations with her should be of the most friendly character....We feel deeply interested that she should establish a stable government.

We go to war with Mexico solely for the purpose of conquering an honorable and permanent peace.⁶³

New Mexico's long history was embarking on a new era, the beginning of which would cast Manuel Alvarez in an important role.

News of war travelled across the plains faster than Buchanan's message. As soon as Brigadier General Stephen Watts Kearney, commander of the Army of the West, received his orders to take New Mexico and California, he sent "spies" to confer "with Don Manuel Alvarez."⁶⁴ Meanwhile, George Thomas Howard was appointed to transport the news of war to the caravans and Americans along the trail and in

Santa Fé. On June 17 the information reached Santa Fé.⁶⁵ Alvarez "on his own initiative, had an immediate interview with Armijo" to convince him it would be wiser to capitulate.⁶⁶ Alvarez argued that it would be far better to be an "inconsiderable portion of a powerful republic, than a considerable one of" an unstable nation.⁶⁷ He stressed the historical negligence Mexico demonstrated toward New Mexico, and the resulting poverty. Alvarez admittedly had little success with the Governor but he found the other officials, especially Armijo's advisors, easy prey. "They, not holding such high places, nor so responsible commissions and yet exposed to the same dangers were rather easily won over."⁶⁸ Alvarez's arguments were of some influence in what resulted in the "peaceful submission of the territory."⁶⁹ How much actual influence the Consul had on Armijo is subject to conjecture. He was not the only American to bend the military commandant's ear.

By August 12, Kearney's two emissaries, James Magoffin and Philip St. George Cooke, were in Santa Fé under the flag of truce to parley with Armijo. Speculation is that they bribed the governor to vacate Santa Fé to Kearny's approaching Army of the West. Yet Armijo had any number of reasons for abandoning his defensive position at Apache Pass. He was outnumbered and his troops were poorly trained, armed and positioned. Given the circumstances, it would have been surprising if he had insisted on fighting rather than opting for the less hostile climate to the south.

Kearny's army marched into Santa Fé without firing a shot on August 18. Alvarez's efforts to make the transition as peaceful as possible⁷⁰ were rewarded by his appointment as consular agent, a federal post. He was not, however, appointed a position in the state government set up by Kearny. Joab Houghton was appointed chief justice of the superior court to fulfill his earlier ambitions. Twenty-five year old Frank Blair had recovered enough from his beating by the Taos mob to become the new attorney general. Alvarez's old friend, Charles Bent, was appointed governor, probably on the basis of his long acquaintance with the brigadier general. Since Alvarez had been passed over by Kearny, Bent attempted to fit the consular agent into a situation that would at the same time make New Mexico economically self-sufficient -- the development of mining. Accordingly Bent submitted his plans to the federal government. Alvarez was one of the three proposed land commissioners suggested to Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton. But since Washington did not follow up on the plans, Alvarez never held that office.

Alvarez probably preferred to stay at his store. Business had never been better. There were soldiers everywhere; Santa Fé had as many as 3,500 armed Americans wandering on its streets.⁷¹ The men who made up the army, mostly undisciplined Missouri Volunteers, were big spenders, and since the trail was now free from danger, the soldiers were free to spend. With all the business, Alvarez did manage to keep up with the events of the continuing war.

On October 20, he received a note from somewhere "180 miles below Santa Fe" asking him to collect a debt and adding "we have no news from Chihuahua nor have we heard from the states...."⁷² A month later, the same man wrote from Valverde, "Wool was not heard of and no chance to get in there yet-- Taylor took Monterrey and lost 1,000 men in taking it. The letter also contained reports of a rumor that seven hundred men were on their way from Chihuahua to take New Mexico. The plan was that New Mexicans would rise in revolt and join them."⁷³ On November 27, Isaac Lightner wrote that it looked as if the Mexicans had only begun to fight, and "it is impossible to say when peace will be made...."⁷⁴

By December New Mexico's honeymoon was over; the peaceful transition to United States rule was at an end. Many Mexicans had refused to peacefully accept American occupation. Prominent citizens still considered themselves at war with the occupying force. A revolt was planned for December, but was aborted when word leaked out. Two of the leaders, Don Diego Archuleta and Don Tomás Ortiz fled south to Mexico City. Yet the absence of the two conspirators did not affect the spirit of those remaining. New plans were made and bore fruit when on January 14, 1847 Governor Charles Bent was assassinated in his home at Taos, while his family looked on. Five other people were also killed in the Taos area. Simultaneous revolts broke out at Rio Hondo and Mora. With the news of Bent's death, Colonel Sterling Price, commander of the U.S. forces

in New Mexico took to the snow covered field. He marched his army to Taos encountering rebellious forces along the way at La Cañada and Embudo. Having taken refuge in the church at Taos Pueblo, the rebels were quickly surrounded. After a stubborn resistance they surrendered.

Trials for Bent's murders were quickly set up. The two judges were Joab Houghton and Carlos Beaubien whose son Narcisco had been killed in the uprising, having been stabbed and lanced until unrecognizable. Foreman of the Grand Jury was George Bent while the prosecuting attorney was Frank Blair. Needless to say, justice was swift and harsh; fifteen men were sentenced to hang. On April 12, 1847 Padre Martínez complained to Manuel Alvarez of a lack of justice and asked him to present a report to Colonel Price on behalf of the condemned.⁷⁵ This was a familiar position for Alvarez, the old Hispanic merchant, differing only in that he was representing a Mexican. Martínez' faith in Alvarez in this matter demonstrates not only his ability to avoid making enemies, but a recognition of the respect that many held for him. In this case Martínez asked Alvarez to plead the case of those who had viciously killed his long-time friend.

Most of the killing in the Taos area was done by Indians from the Taos Pueblo. They did not revolt out of any deep sense of loyalty to Mexico but out of a bitter feeling for revenge. Two years before the revolt, Taos Indians, impressed into Armijo's army, were part of an advance

guard along the Cimmarron River. Such forays were common to protect the trade along the Santa Fé Trail. The American army protected caravans up to Mexican territory where the Mexican army took over. On this particular occasion the advance guard, under the command of Captain Ventura Lobato, was ambushed by a superior force of Texans. Eighteen New Mexicans were killed, all of them Taos Indians. Upon hearing of the defeat Armijo withdrew the main force. For Taos Pueblo the defeat was a bitter loss which became the major factor in their participation in the revolt of 1847.⁷⁶

When Bent was murdered, no one realized how close the Indians had come to getting revenge on the actual cause of the Cimmarron River tragedy. Actually, the viciousness of the revolt was due, in part, to Alvarez himself. Just prior to the ambush Alvarez and Kit Carson had stopped at Bent's Fort on their way east. Since St. Vrain had a west-bound wagon train of fifty-six wagons, Alvarez passed to it the information that Armijo was on his way to meet it. Before long everyone knew of Armijo's maneuver. Some of the company hunters passed the word to Colonel Jacob Snively, commander of the Texas troops. Snively put Colonel Charles A. Warfield in charge of attacking Armijo while he would take care of the Santa Fé-bound caravan. The result was the ambush of Lobato's advance guard on the Cimmarron.⁷⁷ It was also one instance when Bent's spy system unintentionally backfired, eventually contributing to his death.

With the passing of resistance another chapter of Alvarez' life came to a close. He was an eminent man in the many conflicting factions of New Mexico during the Mexican years. While able to get along with Mexican peons, he also worked with the highest of officials for the two countries of which he was, at different times, a citizen. He was bilingual and formally educated, yet his greatest source of intelligence apparently was derived from his practical experiences as a traveler, trader, trapper, merchant, stock raiser and government official. His influence was such that all who participated in the Santa Fé trade or travelled into New Mexico were, in some way, affected. Always ready to help, he became a prominent figure in the development of the Southwest. Yet, his has been a role largely overlooked.

1. John Forsyth to Alvarez, March 22, 1839, no. 145, Read Collection.
2. Litigated Suit prosecuted by David Waldo as Attorney of Powell, Lamont & Co. vs. Philip W. Thompson, November 9, 1839, Abiel Leonard Collection, 1786-1909, State Historical Society of Missouri, p. 1-14; and Contested Action--David Waldo as Attorney of Powell, Lamont & Co., vs. Philip W. Thompson for \$8,000.00, n.d., Abiel Leonard Papers, 1769-1928, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri.
3. H. Leonard to A.W. Turner, April 7, 1840, Leonard Papers.
4. E. Stanley to Leonard, December 21, 1839, Leonard Papers; and Leonard to A.W. Turner, April 7, 1840, Leonard Papers.
5. Leonard to Turner, April 7, 1840, Leonard Papers; and Leonard to Turner, April 9, 1840, Leonard Papers.
6. Powell & Co. vs. Thompson, November 9, 1839, Leonard Collection, p. 8.
7. Bent to Alvarez, November 11, 1839, no. 40, Read Collection.
8. Bent to Alvarez, December 10, 1839, no. 39, Read Collection.
9. Memorial, p. 7-9, 26; Bent to Alvarez, January 30, 1841, no. 46, Read Collection.
10. Bent to Alvarez, December 1, 1840, no. 42, Read Collection.
11. Mentioned in the previous chapter, 2nd page, Chapter IV
12. Memorial, p. 3.
13. J.H. Lyman to Alvarez, December 7, 1840, no. 174, Read Collection; and Lyman to Alvarez, November 29, 1840, no. 173, Read Collection.
14. Lyman to Alvarez, December 7, 1840, no. 174, Read Collection; and Memorial, p. 9.
15. Memorial, p. 9.
16. Lyman to Alvarez, December 7, 1840, no. 174, Read Collection. Underlined in the original.
17. Memorial, p. 10-11; Alvarez to Miranda, May 22, 1841, Reel 28, frames 1291-93; Alvarez to Miranda, June 14, 1841, Reel 28, frames 1647-48, MANM; Jorge Ramirez to Alvarez, May 24, 1841, no. 253, Read Collection; Miranda

to Alvarez, June 11, 1841, no. 210, Read Collection;
Vecar Juan Felipe Ortiz to Alvarez, June 12, 1841, no. 231,
Read Collection; and Tyler, "Gringo Views," NMHR, p. 29.

18. Memorial, p. 5.

19. Lavender, Bent's Fort, p. 205; and Memorial, p. 4.

20. Alvarez to Ellis, January 10, 1840, Consular Dispatches.

21. Tyler, "Gringo Views," NMHR, p. 36.

22. Alvarez to Ellis, January 10, 1840, Consular Dispatches.

23. Memorial, p. 5-7.

24. Ibid, p. 6.

25. Bent to Alvarez, January 16, 1841, no. 44, Read Collection.

26. Two other interesting facts were the presence of Mexican guides with the Indians and the claim that the Arapaho prisoners were originally taken by "Easterners." Bent to Alvarez, January 30, 1841, no. 46, Read Collection. One historian identifies the easterners as Ute Indians. Charles L. Kenner, A History of New Mexican-Plains Indian Relations, (Norman; University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), p. 76-7.

27. Bent to Alvarez, n.d., no. 48, Read Collection;
Bent to Alvarez, March 15, 1841, no. 50, Read Collection;
and Bent to Alvarez, March 22, 1841, no. 51, Read Collection.

28. Bent to Alvarez, March 29, 1841, no. 52, Read Collection.

29. Bent to Alvarez, April 30, 1841, no. 53, Read Collection;
Quoted in Kenner, New Mexico-Plains Indian Relations, p. 77.

30. Alvarez to Webster, December 18, 1842, Consular Despatches.

31. Ibid; Alvarez to Secretary of State, July 1, 1843, Consular Despatches. The office of Secretary of State was temporarily vacant at the time. Abel P. Upshur was sworn in on July 24, 1843.

32. Alvarez to Secretary of State, July 1, 1843, Consular Despatches; and Bent to Alvarez, February 28, 1843, no. 62a, Read Collection.

33. Armijo, Passport for Alvarez, April 3, 1843, no. 129, Read Collection; and Alvarez to Secretary of State, July 1, 1843, Consular Despatches.

34. Thomas Rowland to Alvarez, April 23, 1843, no. 264, Read Collection.

35. Alvarez to Secretary of State, July 1, 1843, Consular Despatches.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid; and Dunham, "Manuel Alvarez," p. 195.
39. Alvarez to Secretary of State, July 1, 1843, Consular Despatches.
40. Ibid. Charles Bent estimated that in specie alone, the Santa Fé trade sent up to half a million dollars to Missouri. And this without the benefit of the Bill. Bent to Alvarez, April 29, 1843, Consular Despatches.
41. Alvarez, Last Will and Testament.
42. A. Beelen to Alvarez, May 28, 1844, NMHR, (Vol. XLVI, no. 3, July 1971), p. 263.
43. Gregg to Alvarez, December 26, 1843, Alvarez Papers.
44. Passport, June 11, 1844, no. 110, Read Collection.
45. Alvarez to Buchanan, June 18, 1845, Consular Despatches; The Santa Fe New Mexican, (February 1, 1876), mentions in the obituary for ex-Chief Justice Joab Houghton that he was appointed U.S. Consul in 1844. The date was wrong and officially he was never the U.S. Consul. The Bill passed.
46. Lavender, Bent's Fort, p. 260; and Bent to Alvarez, February 4, 1846, no. 70, Read Collection.
47. Charles Bent to Manuel Alvarez, January 7, 1843, reel no. 1, doc. no. 61, Alvarez Papers, Coronado Room, University of New Mexico. This document is not included with original Alvarez Papers at the State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe.
48. Charles Bent to Alvarez, February 24, 1845, Alvarez Papers, Coronado Room.
49. Samuel Wethered to Manuel Alvarez, July 16, 1845, Alvarez Papers, State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe.
50. Theodore Wheaton to Alvarez, November 6, 1845, no. 312, Read Collection.
51. Charles Bent to Alvarez, n.d. [1846], Alvarez Papers.

52. W.G. Ritch, ed., New Mexico Blue Book, 1882, (rpt., Albuquerque; University of New Mexico Press, 1968), p. 133. The original was published in Santa Fe, New Mexico; by Charles W. Greene, Public Printer 1882.
53. Charles Bent to Alvarez, February 24, 1846, no. 73, Read Collection. Twitchell points out the disparagement within the hispanic population when Paredes took over Mexico; Ralph Emerson Twitchell, The Military Occupation of New Mexico, 1846-1851, (Denver; Smith-Brooks Company, 1909), p. 63-4.
54. R.L. Duffus, The Santa Fé Trail, (New York; Longmans, Green and Company, 1930), p. 184.
55. Charles Bent to Alvarez, May 3, 1846, no. 87, Read Collection.
56. Juan Bautista Vigil y Alarid to Alvarez, May 5, 1846, Alvarez Papers.
57. Lavender, Bent's Fort, p. 273-74.
58. R.G. Woods to Alvarez, September 14, 1846, Alvarez Papers.
59. Josiah Gregg to Alvarez, May 7, 1846, Alvarez Papers.
60. John Rowland to Alvarez, February 28, 1846, no. 265, Read Collection.
61. Charles Bent to Alvarez, March 2, 1846, no. 75, Read Collection; March 4, no. 76, Read Collection; March 6, 1846, no. 78, Read Collection.
62. Juan Bautista Vigil to Alvarez, April 24, 1846, no. 302, Read Collection.
63. James Buchanan, Secretary of State to Manuel Alvarez, May 14, 1846, no. 98, Read Collection.
64. Webb, The Santa Fe Trade, p. 185-86.
65. George Rutledge Gibson, Journal of A Soldier Under Kearny and Doniphan, 1846-47, Southwest Historical Series, Vol. IV, Ralph P. Bieber ed., (Glendale; The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1935), p. 64; and Alvarez to Buchanan, September 4, 1846, Consular Despatches.
66. Gibson, p. 64.
67. Alvarez to Buchanan, September 4, 1846, Consular Despatches.
68. Ibid.

69. Ibid; and Gibson, p. 87-8.
70. For a report of those efforts see Alvarez to Buchanan, September 4, 1846, Consular Despatches.
71. Duffus, The Santa Fé Trail, p. 209.
72. S. Houck to Alvarez, October 20, 1846, Alvarez Papers.
73. Houck to Alvarez, November 30, 1846, Alvarez Papers.
74. Isaac Lightner to Alvarez, November 27, 1846, Alvarez Papers.
75. Martinez to Alvarez, April 12, 1847, no. 182, Read Collection.
76. Duffus, The Santa Fé Trail, pp. 186-87.
77. Lavender, Bent's Fort, p. 222, 239: and Duffus, The Santa Fé Trail, p. 186-87.

Conclusion

The last seven years of Alvarez' life is a story that will be told in the future. With his death in April of 1856 passed an important figure in New Mexican history, not to mention his role in American expansion. Obviously he was an active man. He left his home in Leon, Spain to go to Mexico where he was present during the revolution. After Mexican Independence he left Mexico only to re-enter its northern frontier under the guise of an American passport.

In New Mexico he became involved in the fur trading and trapping profession. In the employment of the American Fur Company he trapped in the area of the present Yellowstone National Park. He also set up a store in Santa Fe which he was to operate for the rest of his life. Through his mercantile activities he became one of the prominent men on the Santa Fe Trail.

His disposition is reflected by the many lasting friendships he made. This was indicated in his appointment to the office of United States Consul. Not one to reject

a challenge, Alvarez became an active diplomat. As such he incurred the anger of his chief advisory Governor Manuel Armijo, and was almost assassinated by a Mexican mob during the Texan-Santa Fe Expedition, had a confrontation with Secretary of State Daniel Webster, and played a major role in preparing New Mexico for the eventual American occupation.

Alvarez was a man of ambition, yet compassion. He had command of everyone's respect. His motivation is a question yet unanswered although he took too many risks for his financial welfare to be of primary concern. He was a man who influenced almost everyone who passed through Santa Fe or was involved in the trade. He was in a sense, a man for all seasons.

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