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AN accident of time in June 1540 resulted in bloodshed, murder, the martyrdom of Franciscan priests and an animosity on the part of the Zuñi Indians for people of Spanish ancestry which has lasted more than 400 years.

The chronicles of Coronado's expedition into the Southwest in 1540-42 in search of the Seven Cities of Cibola report incidents which the Spaniards attributed to the treachery of the Indians. The battle with Coronado at Hawikuh was a completely unfamiliar procedure for the Zuñis. Indians of the Southwest were accustomed to make raids and counter raids. But they did not fight in battle array and they did not stand siege.

The battle was not treachery. It was only the Indians' way of handling a strange and difficult situation which happened by a queer twist of fate, and never would happen again if the history of the period were to be re-lived. Vasquez de Coronado and his army leaders were unaware of the accident of time which made the Spanish people the traditional enemies of the Zuñi people.

Captain Juan Jaramillo, who accompanied Coronado, wrote a detailed account of the entire expedition telling of other Indian tribes with which the expedition came in contact. He unknowingly called for an explanation when he wrote: "All of these Indians, except the first in the first village of Cibola, received us well."

One explanation of the conflict with the Spanish is hinted in a story handed down by the people that the first soldiers to come from Mexico used the carved wooden figures in the Zuñi altars for firewood. The detailed story, however, has come to light only now through historical research involving

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the correlation of dates of the Julian calendar which was in use in 1540 with the primitive ritual calendar of the Zuñis.

The first contact made by Coronado and his men with the people of Zuñi was at the sacred lake near the confluence of the Little Colorado and Zuñi rivers a few miles northwest of St. Johns, Ariz. The Indians he met were members of a ceremonial party which had come to the lake on a quadrennial pilgrimage as part of the summer solstice ceremonies.

The Indians promised Coronado the food his men needed on the next day, and then ran away. That night there was a skirmish between a small party of Indians and an advance mounted patrol headed by Don Garcia Lopez de Cardenas. The Indians were the pilgrims and the place their sacred camping ground within a day's journey from the village of Zuñi. The location is a hogback through which the Zuñi river flows a few miles south of Witch Wells, Ariz. It was here, probably, that the Zuñis saw their Katchina altar figures burning in the campfires of the soldiers.

The decorum of the summer solstice pilgrimage at that point was thoroughly disrupted by the Spaniards. But the Zuñis were determined to carry it out in close traditional form even though it meant a fight.

Don Garcia reported the skirmish with the Indians that night to Coronado at the base camp, and the next day the troops moved toward Hawikuh, the first of the Zuñi villages. Here they found the Indians drawn up in hostile formation, and despite conciliatory advances from Coronado they chose to fight. It was a delaying action to permit the pilgrims to escort the Kor-kok-shi gods into the village of Zuñi some 15 miles to the northeast at sundown in traditional pattern, that they might dance for rain and bountiful crops uninterrupted in the plazas. The battle of Hawikuh was a successful delaying action. Coronado was wounded in the affray, and after the capture of the town his starving men remained there for several days to regain their strength on captured food supplies.

Coronado reported that three days after the capture of the town some of the people living there brought him gifts

and petitioned for peace, then suddenly packed off their belongings to the hills. It was not until Coronado recovered from the arrow wound in his foot some ten days later that he went on to the village of Zuñi where he found only a few old people. The rest had taken refuge on Corn Mountain, as became their custom during the many ensuing years of Spanish and Mexican occupation when things grew hot for them in their villages.

The rain making ceremonies of the summer solstice were carried out by the Zuñis that year under strange and trying circumstances. Some of the people died at Hawikuh that the gods might dance. What the reaction of the pilgrims was when they first saw the strange white people on their awesome horses will never be known. But when the strangers violated their shrines, the newcomers, whoever they might be, became unwelcome. Even today all people of Spanish ancestry, even those individuals whom the Zuñis consider to be their friends, are persona-non-grata at their ceremonials. They respect the feelings of the Zuñis by staying away. Some people trace the present-day resistance of the Zuñis to the ways of the white man and to their new right to vote to the accident of time which permitted Coronado to blunder into the most important ceremony on the Zuñi summer ritual calendar.

The key to the correlation of time which makes possible this analysis of the situation 409 years after it occurred lies in the date of the fixed feast of St. John the Baptist and the date of the summer solstice in 1540, both on the Julian calendar.

The Julian calendar was established about 45 B. C., but got out of synchronization with the seasons (equinoxes and solstices) because 365¼ days was used as a basis of reckoning instead of the true period of the earth's tropical year which is 11 minutes 14 seconds shorter. This amounts to an error of a little more than three days in 400 years (one day in 128 years).

At the time of the council of Nice in 325 A. D., the Julian calendar was correct so that the equinox fell on March 21.

But by 1582 when Pope Gregory established the present Gregorian calendar, it had fallen back ten days. The Lowell Observatory at Flagstaff, Ariz., reports in the year 1540 the time of summer solstice was about 9.49 days earlier. Dropping the fraction, since it is less than half a day, the date of the summer solstice in 1540 was June 12, instead of June 21. This provides the information for the dates of the summer solstice ceremonies of the Zuñis in 1540.

When Pope Gregory in 1582 abolished the Julian calendar and substituted the New Style Gregorian calendar he directed the day following the feast of St. Francis, that is to say October 5, 1582, be reckoned as the 15th of the month. The next year the feast of St. Francis was celebrated October 14 as today. Applying the same procedure to St. John's day, observed under the Julian calendar on June 14, the date was advanced to the present June 24 date. The Julian calendar date for St. John's day is important in the history of the Coronado expedition, for it is from that date that the progress of the Spanish soldiers toward Hawikuh and Zuñi can be dated accurately.

The summer solstice had been observed two days earlier and the Zuñis had started preparations for the traditional ceremonies when Coronado's men reached a river they called the San Juan, because they reached it on the feast day of St. John the Baptist, June 14. The progress of the expedition is reported in detail in the account given by Capt. Juan Jaramillo:

> Leaving here we went to another river, through a somewhat rough country, more toward the north, to a river which we called the Rafts [de las Balsas] because we had to cross on these as it was rising. It seems we spent two days between one river and the other [June 16] and I say this because it is so long since we were there that I may be wrong in some days, though not in the rest. From here we went to another river which we called the Slough [de la Barranca]. It was two short days from one to the other, and the direction almost northeast [June 18]. From here we went to another river which we called the Cold River [el rio Frio] on account of its water being so, in one day's journey [June 19], and from here we went by a pine mountain, where we found almost on top of it, a cool spring and streamlet, which was another day's march [June 20].

From here we went to another river, which we called the Red River[1] [Bermejo], two day's journey in the same direction, but less toward the northeast [June 22].

Here we saw an Indian or two, who afterward appeared to belong to the first settlement of Cibola [Hawikuh]. From here we came in two days journey [June 24] to the said village, the first of Cibola.

Pedro de Castañeda of Najera, writing some 20 years after the expedition of 1540-42, presents this information:

From here they went on through the wilderness, and in 15 days came to a river about eight leagues[2] from Cibola which they called the Red River because its waters were muddy and reddish.... The first Indians from that country were seen here—two of them who ran away giving the news [June 22]. During the night following the next day [June 23-24] about two leagues [5.26 miles] from the village [Hawikuh], some Indians in a safe place yelled so that, although the men were ready for anything, some were so excited they put their saddles on hind side before; but these were the new fellows. When the veterans had mounted and ridden around the camp the Indians fled. None of them could be caught because they knew the country.

The next day [June 24] they entered the settled country in good order, and when they saw the first village, which was Cibola, such were the curses that some hurled at Friar Marcos that I pray God may protect him from them.

These two accounts establish fairly accurately that Coronado met the first Zuñi Indians at the juncture of the Little Colorado and the Zuñi rivers close to the location of their sacred lake, and later that night a skirmish occurred at the camping place traditionally used by the Zuñi pilgrims on their return to the village.

The year 1948 was a pilgrimage year for the Zuñis to the sacred lake, Kothuluwala-wa, northwest of St. Johns, Ariz. Zuñi tradition calls for the pilgrimage every "fourth year." However, observations in recent times indicate the Zuñis count the ceremonial seasons—winter and summer—each as a "year" so that actually the pilgrimages have been taking place with regularity every second calendar year. This is

1. Bandelier identifies this as the Little Colorado river. At that time of year the Zuñi river runs almost dry, while even today there is a substantial stream in the Little Colorado.

2. An old Spanish league was 2.63 miles, eight leagues being equal to 21.04 miles.

true with other "four year" ceremonials. The summer solstice in 1948 occurred on June 21, and the pilgrims returned to the village with the Kor-kok-shi gods shortly before sundown on July 3, the 12th day in elapsed time after the solstice. The Zuñi observation of the solstice is made at sunset on the day it occurs, so when the pilgrims enter the village with the gods it is the 12th sunset after the date of the solstice.

In the year 1540 the summer solstice occurred on June 12 the Lowell Observatory reports. With the Zuñis starting to count at sunset on June 12 for the summer solstice ceremonies, the pilgrims with the Kor-kok-shi gods would arrive back in the village at sundown June 24. That is the date of the battle at Hawikuh, 15 miles southwest of the main Zuñi village where the ceremonies are conducted.

Stevenson, in the 23rd annual report to the Bureau of Ethnology, reports pilgrims from the village of Zuñi make a journey every four years to the sacred lake in which the Katchina gods live. On their trip out they camp the first night (ninth night after the solstice or June 21 in 1540) on a ridge or hogback through which the Zuñi river flows. The next day (June 22 in 1540) the pilgrims split into two parties, each going to sacred heights close to the sacred lake, and later sink weighted prayer sticks in the marshy lake. They camp that night on one of the hills, and on the morning of the 11th day after solstice (June 23 in 1540) they return to the marsh to hunt for turtles. It was June 23, 1540 the accounts disclose that Coronado made first contact with the Zuñis.

After the turtle hunt they make a sacred fire by friction and light a torch of cedar bark which is to be carried back to Zuñi. Once the fire is kindled it is a signal for the start of the return trip. Other brands are kept in readiness for the fire must not go out on the way. They also gather pinkish clay used by the personators of the gods.

The carrier of the torch runs back and forth as the pilgrims return, setting fire to dead clumps of sagebrush so that the smoke may rise in clouds like the breath clouds from the gods of the lake. That night (June 23 in 1540) they camp

at the same ridge where they camped on the trip out. A fire is built and a dance held until midnight. Early in the morning of the 12th day after the solstice (June 24 in 1540) they continue on to Zuñi, meeting the Kor-kok-shi gods outside the village. They cross the river and enter the town at sunset to dance in the plazas.

Coronado wrote a letter on August 3, 1540 to Don Antonio de Mendoza, viceroy of New Spain, in which he reported the day the expedition met the Indians he sent Don Garcia Lopez ahead to occupy any bad places the Indians might defend. Don Garcia apparently discovered the hogback campsite used by the Zuñis on their pilgrimage, for the night he occupied it was the very night the Zuñi pilgrims were scheduled to use it. He also tells of the skirmish on the ridge that night with the Indians.

Here is a translation of part of his letter:

I sent the army-master, Don Garcia Lopez de Cardenas, with 15 horsemen, a day's march ahead of me, in order to explore the country and prepare the way.... The way was very bad for at least 30 leagues and more through impassable mountains. But when we had passed these 30 leagues, we found fresh rivers and grass like that of Castile.... No Indians were seen during the first day's march, after which four Indians came out with signs of peace, saying they had been sent to that desert place to say that we were welcome, and that on the next day the tribe would provide the whole force with food. The army-master gave them a cross, telling them to say to the people in their city that they need not fear, and that they shoud have their people stay in their own houses, because I was coming in the name of His Majesty to defend and help them.

After this was done, Ferrando Alvarado came back to tell me that some Indians had met him peaceably, and that two of them were with the army-master waiting for me. I went to them forthwith and gave them some paternosters and some little cloaks, telling them to return to their city and say to the people there that they could stay quietly in their houses and they need not fear.

Coronado apparently was playing safe and prepared for "treachery" from the Indians. He continued:

After this I ordered the army-master to go and see if there were any bad passages which the Indians might be able to defend, and to seize and hold any such until the next day when I could come up. He

went, and found a very bad place where we might have received very much harm. He immediately established himself there and with the force which he was conducting. The Indians came that very night to occupy the place so as to defend it, and finding it taken, they assaulted our men. According to what I have been told, they attacked like valiant men[3] although in the end they had to retreat in flight, because the army-master was on the watch and kept his men in good order.[4] The Indians sounded a little trumpet as a sign of retreat, and did not do any injury to the Spaniards.[5]

The army-master sent me notice of this the same night, so that on the next day I started with as good order as I could, for we were in such great need for food that I thought we should all die of hunger if we continued to be without provisions for another day, especially the Indians, since altogether we did not have two bushels of corn, and so I was forced to hasten forward without delay.

Here Coronado reports that the Indians lighted fires to signal the approach of the troops toward the village. Smoke signals probably were ignited, but it is interesting to consider the possibility, however remote, that the signals may have been those lighted by the torch carrier with the party of pilgrims as it continued to carry out in detail the traditions of the ceremony despite the threat from the white strangers. This is what Coronado said:

The Indians lighted their fires from point to point, and these were answered from the distance with as good understanding as we could have shown. Thus notice was given concerning how we went and where we had arrived.

The story of the battle of Hawikuh as told by Coronado in his letter to the viceroy is well known. The Zuñis rejected his offer of peace and showered his emissaries with arrows. A few of the Indians were killed in a preliminary skirmish which preceded the siege of the town. He reported his men were weak and "the hunger they suffered would not permit of any delay." The people of Hawikuh defended the walls with showers of arrows and by hurling rocks at the soldiers

3. Don Garcia must have wanted to make himself and his men look good in Coronado's report. Castañeda waited 20 years to describe it as a fiasco.

4. Castañeda said some of the men put their saddles on backwards in the excitement.

5. The trumpet sound might have come from bullroarers used by the pilgrims in the ceremonies.

below. Coronado was bruised and cut on the face by a rock and an arrow pierced his foot.

"But, by the pleasure of God," he wrote, "these Indians surrendered, and their city was taken with the help of Our Lord, and a sufficient supply of corn was found there to relieve our necessities."

So while Coronado nursed his food wound, and his men their numerous cuts and bruises, and relieved the frenzy of their hunger with captured corn, the pilgrims continued on to Zuñi and danced without interruption in the plazas. After a night spent in one of the kivas the dancers made the rounds of the plazas again the next day to conclude the summer solstice ceremonies.

The battle of Hawikuh had been a successful delaying action. Actually it was a Zuñi victory, for the Spanish never won anything from it except a few bushels of corn; and because of it never were able to establish peace with the Zuñis.