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Notes and Documents

One of the most stirring episodes in the history of New Mexico was the surprisingly sudden and almost bloodless capture of that province in August of 1846 by the American troops under General Stephen W. Kearny.* Our knowledge of this invasion stems almost entirely from American sources: from the official records of the War Department, from the journals of the Santa Fe traders, from the diaries of Kearny's own soldiers. Therefore, we know the story as told by the conquerors. But what of the conquered?

As a matter of record the New Mexicans did feel called upon to explain, and their reports have been on file in the archives of Mexico for more than a hundred years. Two of their reports, in English translation, are now made public. They represent both the official and the unofficial New Mexican versions of how the American invasion was received.

One of these documents was a report written to the President of Mexico from Santa Fe on September 26, 1846, and signed by 105 citizens. Among these were many of the most prominent persons in the province. This represents the unofficial report, but in most respects it is more reliable as a document than the official account. The latter was written by Governor Armijo at Chihuahua on September 8, 1846, and sent with three supporting letters to the Minister of Foreign Relations, Interior, and Police at Mexico City. Still another report was made by the Assembly of New Mexico, from Santa Fe on August 20, 1846, but it was obviously more concerned with villifying Armijo than with reporting the events. Since it is not nearly so full an account as that given by the citizens, its text is not presented here. All three of these documents are on file in the *Archivo de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores* in Mexico City.¹

* These documents with critical comments were submitted for publication by Professor Max L. Moorhead, Professor of History at the University of Oklahoma.

1. Ciudadanos de Nuevo México, *Relación.....de la invasión norteamericana*, L.E.-1088, Tomo XXXIV, 270-282; Gobernador de Nuevo México, *Sobre la invasión a su Departamento*, L.E.-1085, Tomo XXXI, 171-179; Asamblea del Departamento de Nuevo México, *Manifiesto*, L.E.-1093, Tomo XXXIX, 76-79. These manuscripts were

Curiously enough, none of these reports mentions the part played in the American invasion by the merchant James Wiley Magoffin. Magoffin was commissioned by President Polk on June 18, 1846, to "render important services" in the occupation of New Mexico. He accompanied Captain Philip St. George Cooke and a small military escort from the American camp on the Arkansas to Santa Fe and delivered Kearny's ultimatum to Governor Armijo on August 12. There is abundant, though inconclusive, evidence indicating that Magoffin persuaded Armijo and his lieutenant-governor to surrender the province without resistance,² but neither the governor nor the citizens (nor for that matter the Assembly) even mention Magoffin.

In comparing the two contradictory reports which follow, it should be kept in mind that both the citizens and the governor of New Mexico were trying to absolve themselves from blame for their failure to defend the province. In Armijo's case the attempt to justify his action may have been born of desperation as he was then facing a court-martial in Chihuahua.

Report of the Citizens of New Mexico to the President of Mexico
Santa Fe, September 26, 1846

Very Excellent Señor Presidente:

We, the citizens of New Mexico, desiring that a circumstantial relation of the manner and means by which the North American Republic took possession of this country be made known to Your Excellency, have deemed it our duty to make an exact report to Your Excellency of what happened. The object of our intention is to relate the facts as they occurred and to explain the circumstances in which we found ourselves. We do not wish to attack the reputation of any person unjustly, [but] we do wish that the conduct of New Mexico on finding itself invaded by the troops of North America be published, as we are all proud of our good reputation and fame. It will be difficult for us to cite the dates of the official communications of the period as we do not have them at hand, but we still remember the principal incidents, since they are so recent, and we shall relate them to Your Excellency in the order they happened and without adulteration.

At the end of last June the Prefect of the 2nd District [Taos] ad-

found and copied as part of a research project sponsored by the American Philosophical Society.

2. See especially "The Magoffin Papers," edited by William E. Connelley, in *Historical Society of New Mexico, Publications*, No. 24 (1921), 42-63.

vised the Very Excellent Governor and Commandant-General Don Manuel Armijo with special urgency that he had been assured that some of the citizens of the new settlement of Poni had been on the Vermejo River with some soldiers of the United States who told them that a little way up-stream there was a party of six hundred troops, the vanguard of an army sent to invade this Department; and that the main body of that army was already coming here from the Arkansas River.³

Immediately, on July 1st, His Excellency issued a circular to the commandants of the militias of the three districts of the Department, ordering them to place their companies and all inhabitants from the ages of sixteen to fifty-nine, *inclusive*, under arms and bring to the capital of Santa Fe all the forces they could muster from the 1st and 3rd Districts, leaving those of the 2nd on the Taos frontier. The commandant of the latter sent a party to reconnoiter the frontier, and Sr. Armijo arranged for Lieutenant Don Tomás Armijo to do the same. Both the party mentioned and the said Lieutenant returned in a few days and reported that although they had reached the Vermejo River, they had found signs that only a small party of Americans had been there; that it could not be learned whether they were troops or hunters; but that they had retired toward the Arkansas. As a result, Sr. Armijo issued another circular, on July 8, ordering all the inhabitants who had been mobilized to return to their homes but to be ready for action at a moment's notice.

On the 10th of the same month His Excellency received another message, sent from the town of Independence by four New Mexican merchants, advising him that, at the time they were writing, a respectable body of the North American army was marching toward this Department to occupy it on orders of the United States; that the General who commanded it had assured them that their mercantile interests would run no risk, whatever the results of the expedition should be; that he was allowing them to send this letter and was giving orders to his advance troops not to impede its passage. The only thing denied them was for their merchandise to go on in advance of the army, they being expressly ordered to place it in the rear guard.

Thus, assured of the march of the invading army, Sr. Armijo called a meeting of the authorities and principal residents of the Department, including the licentiate Don Antonio Jáquez and Don Jesús Palacios of Chihuahua, who, also being in the Department, were summoned to Santa Fe. And having shown the said junta the contents of the communication he had received and having consulted with it as to whether

3. According to the Assembly of New Mexico, Governor Armijo had been in correspondence with "influential persons" in the United States for a long time, and especially since January, and that he had received advance warnings of the impending American invasion. By May at the latest he knew beyond all doubt that the invasion was being prepared. Asamblea de Nuevo México, *Manifiesto*, Aug. 20, 1846, *loc. cit.*, 76-77.

or not the Department should be defended, His Excellency called upon Sr. Palacios, who declared that in his opinion the question of whether or not the Department should be defended should not be even considered as the right to do so was well recognized, that the purpose of the junta should be merely to discuss the means of defence. Sr. Jáquez expressed substantially the same idea, and after a long discussion in which all exhibited their utmost patriotism, they concluded by offering that His Excellency might dispose of their lives and properties for the defence of the country. His Excellency offered his most expressive gratitude for the feelings which they harbored. Reiterating that they should be ready on a moment's notice, he explained that, for his part, he was prepared to sacrifice his own life and property on the altars of the fatherland. With that he dissolved the junta.

On the 1st or 2nd of August, Don Pío Sambrano, a merchant from Chihuahua, arrived at this city and advised His Excellency that the North American expedition was coming; that the army was composed of five thousand men, more or less;⁴ that it carried fourteen pieces of artillery; that it had already begun its march from Bent's Fort toward this city; and that an officer would arrive within three or four days with papers from the North American general addressed to His Excellency Sr. Armijo.

This came to pass, and the contents of the correspondence mentioned reduced itself to General Kearny telling Sr. Armijo that he was coming under orders of the government of the United States to take possession of this Department and would attack if resistance were made; if not, he would respect the lives, property, and religion of its inhabitants.⁵ Sr. Armijo answered that he did not wish to surrender the Department under his command, nor should he, nor could he; that the people under his leadership harbored these same feelings.⁶ Later His Excellency received news through various channels that the invading army was composed of only one thousand five hundred men.

In these circumstances he re-issued orders to the three Districts through their military chiefs and prefects to muster all the military and civilian forces available at once and concentrate them in Santa Fe. These events he reported to the honorable Assembly at once and asked it for funds amounting to one thousand pesos to cover the needs of the regular troops. The very excellent corporation responded by giving him authority to negotiate a loan of the said sum, the Department's revenues being mortgaged under the responsibility of the same

4. This exaggeration may have been due to the presence of a large caravan of merchants accompanying the army. Sambrano was apparently one of the Mexican merchants engaged in the Missouri trade who, along with the American merchants, were restrained from going on ahead of the American forces. After reaching his camp on the Arkansas, Kearny allowed Sambrano to proceed to Santa Fe to inform the New Mexican government of the intentions of the U. S. troops. See Asamblea de Nuevo México, *Manifiesto*, loc. cit., 77.

5. For the full text of Kearny's letter to Armijo, see below.

6. For the full text of Armijo's reply to Kearny, see below.

very excellent corporation. Sr. Armijo did not utilize this resource.

On August 8th the forces from outside began to arrive at this city, and on the 14th they began to leave in order to situate themselves in the Cañon de Pecos, five leagues from here.⁷ On that day His Excellency also began to exempt from joining the campaign all those who paid him a given sum, from twenty to two hundred pesos, and these amounted to forty-five persons. He also ordered the opening of a voluntary subscription under the direction of the Prefect of this city in order to collect cash for the expenses of the campaign, and he received the sum which the said Prefect collected. We do not know what the total was, nor what disposition he made of it. Afterwards he ordered that the municipal funds of the very illustrious Council of this city be surrendered to him for the same purpose. This was done, but he refused to give receipt for the one hundred and seventy-some pesos which were delivered. On the 15th he dictated a measure providing for the seizure of horses and mules from the residents of this city in order to mount his regular troops. These consisted of two hundred and fifty dragoons and garrison soldiers,⁸ many of whom were still unmounted as the horses and mules which had been previously received from the citizens outside the capital had not been sufficient for this purpose.

More than four thousand men—mounted, armed, and supplied with ammunition as best they could at their own expense—presented themselves to His Excellency to aid in the defense of the country.⁹ For sixty leagues around from this city these masses rushed in at the call of their government, abandoning their families and property. These they left exposed to the incursions of the savages, who, not losing the opportunity offered them, attacked several points on the frontier, stealing what they could, killing several families, and carrying off some women and children as prisoners.

On the 16th Sr. Armijo left this city with his dragoons and the remaining residents for the said Cañon de Pecos, where the other inhabitants were waiting encamped. They carried four pieces of artillery of 4- and 6-calibre narrow-taper. He also issued an order for the members of the very excellent Departmental Assembly and the principal residents of this city and the surrounding country who were present to accompany him. This was carried out in part. Having camped in the said canyon and having convened the members of the honorable Assembly there, His Excellency invited them to advise him whether to defend the Department or enter into negotiations with the enemy. To this one of the gentlemen replied that such was not the place for deliberations; that they had gathered there not as members of the very excellent corporation, although they were proud of belonging to

7. According to Armijo's report, the order for the recruits to assemble at Santa Fe was issued August 9, and they were finally assembled there August 14. See below.

8. There were two hundred regulars according to Armijo. See below.

9. The Assembly's report also says there were over four thousand recruits. Asamblea de Nuevo México, *Manifiesto*, loc. cit., 77. Armijo reported that they amounted to only eighteen hundred. See below.

it, but as soldiers; that it behooved them to act as such, doing as they were ordered. Thereupon His Excellency assembled the militia officers and the leading inhabitants and consulted with them on the course he should follow under the circumstances. The only one who spoke said that they had been gathered in the field to fight, that they should and wished to do so. His Excellency then replied that he would not risk facing battle with people lacking military training, and that he would do whatever seemed fitting to him and with his [regular] troops. After that he ordered them [the militia and civilians] to return to their homes. Then he assembled the officers of the regular troops and consulted with them on the measures to be taken, the enemy being then five leagues away. They replied that they would advance and give battle. When this decision was heard by the troops, it was received with simultaneous *vivas* and spontaneous acclamation. His Excellency then said he [too] was resolved to press forward. But as soon as the citizenry retired, instead of advancing he and the dragoons and artillery retreated.¹⁰

On leaving this city, Sr. Armijo left the political and military command of the Department in charge of the Secretary of Government [Juan Bautista Vijil y Alarid], ignoring those whom the laws designated to occupy these posts.

This Very Excellent Sir, is what happened in the Department of New Mexico and to its inhabitants. On retiring from the field on orders from Sr. Armijo, they were publicly insulted with the epithet of cowards by this same gentleman after they had rallied to him in compliance with their duty and desire.

We later learned that His Excellency took similar leave of the members of the Department's garrison companies: the Santa Fe, Taos, and Vado. He ignored the good and constant services of these old troops of the Mexican Republic who had given no cause for being treated in such a manner. He then abandoned the artillery and took with him about thirty or forty dragoons from the regular cavalry's 2nd and 3rd regiments, apparently those whom he deemed necessary for an escort through the deserted terrain which he crossed in his shameful flight. He also took the horses and mules which he had seized from the inhabitants and on which his troops were mounted.¹¹

As a result, the troops of the United States occupied this city on August 18th without the slightest resistance.

Very Excellent Sir, we wish that the conduct of our governor and

10. This account of the patriotic disposition of both the civilian and regular troops is substantially the same as that reported by the Assembly. *Asamblea de Nuevo México, Manifiesto, loc. cit.*, 78. Armijo's report offers a quite different version. See below.

11. According to the Assembly, Armijo, after dismissing the auxiliary forces, retreated to Cañada de los Alamos, where he spent the night. That evening some desertion occurred, and on the next day (August 17), he dismissed all except the dragoons. *Asamblea de Nuevo México, Manifiesto, loc. cit.*, 78-79. According to Armijo, all deserted except seventy dragoons, and they accompanied him on his retreat to Chihuahua. See below.

commandant-general, Don Manuel Armijo, had been other than it was as we are all interested in the good name and reputation of the Mexican Republic and the honor of its army. There were not lacking those who would have advised His Excellency as a last resort in those anxious circumstances to send an official communication to the North American general saying that he was retiring with his military forces to the right bank of the Río Bravo del Norte until the Mexican government should give him further orders, as they were not sufficient to give battle; that he would protest before the entire world, before God and men, that he did not recognize this Department as territory of the United States, as it had never been a part of Texas; but that, obliged by the circumstances, he was beginning a military retreat, declaring with the greatest solemnity that the Department of New Mexico was not surrendering to the republic of North America. But he did not wish to adopt this measure. It would have saved his military reputation and in some measure covered his responsibility.

Since the middle of last June His Excellency Sr. Armijo knew beyond doubt that the [American] expedition would arrive this year. He also received definite news of the said expedition on July 10th, through the four merchants from this Department whom we have mentioned. Very early in August, Sr. Don Pío Sambrano arrived at this city and he, too, told him that the said expedition was on the road. If he had mustered the citizenry in July which he gathered later; if he had marched with it and his troops to meet the enemy then, not at the gateway of the city as he did, but at the greatest possible distance from it; if he had not allowed the more than fifty thousand pesos entering the frontier customs house of this city in July to be invested in other than the organization of the country's defense; if he had raised and trained companies for that purpose, as he had more than enough men with arms, horses, and their own equipment; if the money he collected from exempting some individuals from the campaign had been put to the same use; if he also had designated the same purpose for that collected by voluntary subscription in this city and for that which he received from the municipal funds; if he had arranged in time for the production of munitions of war, for which there was more than enough powder and lead in the Department; if he had purchased some food supplies to have in reserve; if he had taken advantage of the good disposition which all of the citizens exhibited at the junta which he convoked in this city, in which they offered him their lives and property; if he had accepted the generous offers of the same which the visiting vicar and various other wealthy residents of the Department had made him; and finally, if he had personally marched to the frontier with the forces which he could have had at his disposal: without doubt we would have fought the invaders, firing at them day and night. We would have managed to surprise them and seize their horses, to ambush them in the waterless deserts, to burn their pasturage, to take advantage of the almost inaccessible mountain passes which they had to cross, and,

finally, we would have made some kind of resistance. It would be a great deal for us to venture that victory would have crowned our efforts, but at least we would have had the honor of having tried. Nothing, absolutely nothing was done. And Sr. Armijo can say full well: *I have lost everything, including honor.*

More than four thousand men are witness to the deeds which we have related. The entire Department is convinced of the truth of our assertions, and our honor, more than any other consideration, has obliged us to send Your Excellency this repetitious manifesto so that at no time may it be believed that we have been a disgrace to the Mexican nation, with which we are bound by so many ties. We offer Your Excellency our most distinguished respects and attentive considerations.

God and Liberty. Santa Fe. September 26, 1846.

[signed]¹² Antonio Sandoval; Juan A. Ortiz, vicario foraneo; Tomas Ortiz; Vicente Otero; Jose Francisco Baca y Terras, prefecto interino del Departamento; Donaciano Vigil; Jose Serafin Ramirez y Casanoba, contador de la tesoreria; Jose Francisco Ortiz, capitan de Ejercito; Pablo Dominguez; Francisco Sabedra; Nicolas Pino; Antonio Jose Otero; Manuel Doroteo Pino; Jose Maria Uranga [?]; Jose Maria Abreu; Miguel de Olona [?] y Ortiz; Nicolas Quintana; Toribio Sedillo; Cesilio Robles; Domingo Fernandez; Tomas Armijo; Francisco Baca Ortiz, capitan de Ejercito; Antonio Sena y Rivera; Miguel E. Pino; Jose Francisco Sena; Ignacio Moya; Juan Esteban Sena; Jose Fenovio [?]; Juan Otero; Anastacio Sandoval; Jesus Maria de Arce y Olguin; Manuel Antonio Otero; Felipe Sandoval; Francisco Sandoval; Nerio Antonio Montolla; Francisco Ortiz y Delgado, capitan de Ejercito; Narciso Feliz; Simon Delgado; Tomas Rivera; Bto. Amo. Larra-goitia [?]; Manuel Navares; Jose del Balle; Jorge Ramirez; Antonio Alarid y Sanchez; Jose Miguel Romero; Jose Emeterio Perea; Fernando Ortiz y Delgado; Manuel Delgado; Clemente Sarrasino, prefecto del Distrito; Jose Antonio Otero, casa de Sandia; Julian Perea; Juan Perea; Jose Maria Gutierrez; Jose Perea; Julian Lucero [?]; Blas Lucero; Jose Francisco Tilla [?]; Juan Jose Lucero; Santiago Gonzalez; Juan Domingo Valensia; Mariano Yrizarri; Jose Gonzalez; Manuel Armijo [obviously not Gov. Armijo]; Rafael Armijo; Jose Maria — [?], juez de la Ynstancia; Juan Sanches y Castillo, juez de paz de Valencia; Andres Lujan; Vicente Armijo; Francisco Aragon; Manuel Sanchez; Pedro Otero; Francisco Antonio Otero; Salvador Gonzalez; Jose Chavez; Jose Gregorio Aragon; Juan Salazar; Miguel Antonio Otero; Bentura Toledo; Jose Salazar; Jose de Jesus Lujan; Jose de Jesus Baca; Felipe Valles; Jose Salazar y Otero; Jose Ygnacio Salazar; Jose Antonio Chavez; Juan de Jesus Chavez; Jose Francisco Chavez y Baca; Juaquin Alejandro Bassan; Mariano Silva; Juan Geronimo Flora [?]; Miguel Beita; Nicolas Valencia, cura de Belen;

12. There are 105 of these signatures, some few of which are so badly scrawled that their identity is in question.

Francisco Pino; Antonio Jose Castillo; Jose Maria Chaves y Pino; Bisente Baca; Jose Felipe Castillo; Manuel Pino; Juakin Padilla; Thomas Luna [?]; Antonio Jose Luna; Francisco Sarracino; J Manuel Gallegos; Juan Nepomuceno Gutierrez; Jose Vicente Suarez [?], cura del Socorro.

Report of Gov. Manuel Armijo to the Minister of Foreign Relations,
Interior and Police

CHIHUAHUA, SEPTEMBER 8, 1846

By the special communications which I sent to Your Excellency¹³ the Very Excellent Sr. General-in-Chief of the Army of the Republic, who today assumes the Executive authority of the nation, will be advised that the United States, that perfidious and faithless power, sent a force numbering from three to four thousand men¹⁴ to occupy the State under my command. Immediately I formed auxiliary companies with their respective chiefs, [composed] of all the citizens in the Department who had arms; I sent out scouts to observe them, and they advised me of everything. And I reported to the commandants-general of Chihuahua and Durango, informing them that with the small military force which I had, it was impossible to resist that which was coming from the United States to invade my Department; that even though I had some armed citizens, in all they were short of artillery, and I had no means at all of supplying them; and that I hoped that out of the patriotism they would reinforce me without loss of time in the most efficacious manner possible so as to punish the boldness of those usurpers who were coming to make themselves masters of the richest and most fertile departments in the Nation. While awaiting these reinforcements (which I did not receive because the Commandant-General of Chihuahua was unable to reach even the first settlements of my Department and that of Durango did not even leave his capital), but not failing to prepare my own defence, making use of such resources as my Department had, I received notice on the 9th of last month [August] from the scouts which I had sent that the forces of the United States were at Bent's Fort.¹⁵ I also learned, through one of the Mexicans who managed to leave the enemy camp and join my scouts, that the force which was coming was of not less than two thousand five hundred men, nor more than three thousand; that they carried twenty-four pieces of artillery of large calibre, well-supplied and well-mounted. On the 11th Captain Cú [Cooke] with twelve dragoons presented himself to me and delivered a communication from the chief of the enemy forces, which I enclose for Your Excellency, in the copy

13. These earlier and presumably briefer reports are not on file in the Archivo de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores.

14. See above, f.n.4.

15. According to the report of the citizens, Armijo received this information on the 1st or 2nd of August. See above.

marked No. 1.¹⁶ It was answered immediately in the terms which Your Excellency will see in the copy No. 2.¹⁷

On the 9th of the month mentioned, when I learned that the enemy's forces were at Bent's Fort, I ordered the auxiliary companies that I had formed to be moved.¹⁸ At last, on the 14th, I got them assembled—one thousand eight hundred men in number¹⁹—not having been able to accomplish this before because they were dispersed throughout the towns. And on the 15th I gave orders for them to march out of Santa Fe and await me at seven or eight leagues distance, where I joined them with two hundred men, which including the officers was all the [regular] military force there was in the Department.²⁰ On the 16th I started my march with the said force, and on the same day I joined the auxiliaries who were waiting for me.

As I was informed that all of the auxiliary companies were not disposed to offer resistance, I immediately convoked a junta of officers with all of the most influential persons of the Department who accompanied me for the purpose of endorsing my decision. After they were convened I informed them that the enemy forces were two leagues away, that the hour of combat was approaching, that their patriotism and the advantageous position which we held [Apache Pass] made me believe that we would obtain a complete victory, and finally I stirred up their patriotism by every means I could think of. But unfortunately all was in vain. The first indication which the captains of the auxiliary companies gave me was that the soldiers did not want to offer any resistance because they did not have supplies or artillery, and that they did not wish to sacrifice themselves uselessly and fill their country with more calamities. Having just made this manifestation, all retreated, and only the two hundred men with whom I had left Santa Fe remained with me. Later I convoked a council of officers in which it was resolved unanimously to retreat until we could join forces with the Commandant-General of Chihuahua, which should [then] have been very near our first settlements. This resolution I adopted as I believed it to be prudent under those circumstances. I suspected with good reason that the garrison companies, which comprised the major part of my force, would take the same resolution as our auxiliaries. This occurred that night. All the others deserted, and on the following day [August 17th] the remainder, leaving only of the said companies Captain Antonio Sena, the prefect of the 1st District of Santa Fe; Graduate Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Martínez, and Alferez Gaspar Ortiz, worthy certainly of the consideration of the Supreme Government, for

16. See below.

17. See below.

18. The report of the citizens implies that the order was issued earlier in stating that the forces began to arrive in Santa Fe on August 8th. See above.

19. "Over four thousand men," according to the citizens' report. See above.

20. According to the citizens the militia began to leave Santa Fe on August 14th rather than the 15th, and the regulars numbered two hundred and fifty men. See above.

they abandoned their families and possessions rather than follow the bad example of their comrades.²¹

On the 17th, my forces being reduced to seventy dragoons with three pieces of artillery and one howitzer, badly-mounted and worse-supplied, I began my march [*i. e.*, retreat]. That evening, having received word that I was being pursued by the enemy, I decided to force my march and, the artillery impeding me, I ordered it spiked at El Mano de las Gallinas, between the points of Galisteo and Serillos. On the 20th I made special report of all these occurrences to the Commandant-General of Chihuahua,²² assuring him that I would force my marches as much as possible until joining his forces, but no matter how strenuously I did so, I was unable to reach them short of the town of El Paso del Norte. There I put the small force that remained with me at his orders, and from there we continued our march to this capital [Chihuahua].

These, Very Excellent Señor, are the facts which caused me with deepest sorrow to retreat from my Department. They prove sufficiently that there was no other prudent resolution to adopt. Why and with what justice should I decide to sacrifice uselessly the Valient Seventy who accompanied me when they could come to this frontier (which finds itself threatened by the same enemies and exposed to the same fate as my Department), increase the ranks of their brothers, and if necessary sacrifice themselves, but with honor and for the glory of the Nation? These are the sentiments in my heart, proved by the facts. I abandoned my family and my property, and with the dignity which my post requires, I refused the offers of my enemies, as Your Excellency will see in the accompanying letter, No. 3,²³ in order to come to this frontier and offer my services to the Excellent Sr. Governor and to the Commandant-General, while the Very Excellent Sr. President disposes of my person in the manner which he may believe most fitting.

Please, Your Excellency, inform the Very Excellent Sr. President of the above and accept the most sincere manifestations of my consideration and appreciation. God and Liberty. Chihuahua, September 8, 1846.

[signed] Manuel Armijo.

The three letters which Armijo submitted in support of the foregoing report are worthy of some consideration. The first of these—Kearny's offer of terms to Armijo on August

21. Contrast this version of the attitude and comportment of the troops and civilians with that given in the report of the citizens, above.

22. This report is probably filed in the Archivo de la Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional at Mexico City. The historical materials of this depository are now being catalogued by Luis Zevallos of the Archivo General de la Nación, and a guide is being published entitled *Guía del Archivo Histórico Militar de México*. These records have not as yet been made public.

23. See below.

1st—reveals the United States policy of attempting to gain possession of New Mexico without bloodshed. But it also conceals the true military objective: occupation by the United States of the entire province, on both sides of the Rio Grande.

The second of these letters—Armijo's reply to Kearny on August 12th—is disappointing in that any hint of secret negotiations for a surrender carried on by the American agent James Wiley Magoffin is conspicuously absent. In his reply Armijo categorically refuses to surrender any portion of the territory and even threatens the Americans with armed resistance. At the same time, however, he leaves the door open for further negotiations with Kearny. This would seem to indicate that if secret negotiations were under way in Santa Fe, they had not reached a successful conclusion at this date unless, of course, Kearny was not a party to the understanding.

As for the third letter—from Henry Connelly²⁴ to Armijo on August 19th—some explanation is necessary. It was written on behalf of Kearny on the day after the American occupation of Santa Fe, and its purpose was to induce Armijo, who was then in flight toward Chihuahua, to return under a guarantee of amnesty. Armijo did not take advantage of the offer. After reaching El Paso del Norte and meeting the reinforcements arriving from Chihuahua, Armijo was placed under temporary arrest. He was allowed to write and despatch the report from Chihuahua quoted above and then to proceed to Mexico City to give a verbal account of his conduct in New Mexico to the central government. What happened in the capital has not been made public, but Armijo was apparently exonerated, for he was back in New Mexico as a private citizen after the war, and remained there until his death on December 9, 1853.²⁵

24. Connelly, who later became governor of the Territory of New Mexico, was at this time an American merchant who had resided in the city of Chihuahua since 1823 and had come to Santa Fe at the outbreak of the war. When Kearny offered his terms to Armijo, Connelly accompanied the official emissary, Capt. Philip St. George Cooke, to the American commander with Armijo's reply. If Connelly carried a separate and secret message from the governor, it has never come to light. For fuller biographical information, see William E. Connelley (Ed.), *Doniphan's Expedition and the Conquest of New Mexico and California* (Topeka, Kans., 1907), 276-282, note 65.

25. Ralph E. Twitchell, *The Leading Facts of New Mexican History* (Cedar Rapids,

No. 1

Col. Stephen W. Kearny to Governor Manuel Armijo, General Headquarters of the Army of the West, Encampment on the Arkansas, Bent's Fort, August 1, 1846²⁶

Sir:

By the annexation of Texas to the United States, the Rio Grande from its mouth to its source forms the present dividing line between the United States and Mexico, and I come by order of my Government to take possession of the Country, over a part of which you are now presiding as Governor. I come as a friend, and with the disposition and intention to consider all Mexicans and others as friends who will remain quietly and peaceably at their homes and attend to their own affairs. Such persons shall not be disturbed by any one under my command, either in their person, their property, or their religion. I pledge myself to the fulfillment of this promise. I come to this part of the United States with a strong military force, and a yet stronger one is now following as a reinforcement to us. We have many more troops than sufficient to put down any opposition that you can possibly bring against us, and I therefore, for the sake of humanity, call upon you to submit to fate and to meet me with the same feeling of peace and friendship which I now entertain for and offer to you and to all those over whom you are governor. If you do so, it will be greatly to your own interest and to that of all your countrymen, and for which you will receive their blessing and their prayers. Should you however decide otherwise, determine upon resistance and oppose [array?] the troops you can raise against us, I then say, the blood which may follow, the suffering and the misery which may ensue, will rest on your head, and instead of the blessing of your Countrymen, you will receive their curses, for I shall consider all, whom you bring in arms against us, as enemies and will treat them accordingly. I am sending Your Excellency this communication by Captain Cooke, of my own Regiment, and I recommend to your goodness and attention both him and his small party of 12 Dragoons.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

Stephen W. Kearny, Colonel of the 1st Dragoons.

Iowa, 1912), II, 208, note 145. On his way south from Chihuahua, on September 12, 1846, Armijo, travelling with a merchant train in which he had an investment, met the English traveller Ruxton. The governor's reputation as a coward during the American invasion had travelled faster and farther than he moved himself. When confronted by this charge from Ruxton, Armijo asserted that all of his army had deserted except a small escort. George F. Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains* (London, 1849), 110.

26. As the English copy in the United States National Archives (Adjutant General's Office Files, War Department, 163-K-1846, enclosure) and the Spanish copy submitted by Armijo are substantially the same, the wording of the former is used here rather than a new translation of the latter.

No. 2

Governor Manuel Armijo to Stephen W. Kearny, Santa Fe,
August 12, 1846²⁷

Your Lordship's note of the current dated at the Arkansas Camp has informed me that on orders from your Government and by virtue of the annexation of the Department of Texas, the Río Bravo del Norte from its mouth to its source has been declared by your Government to be the dividing line between that Republic and this; and that as a result Your Lordship has orders to take possession of the major part of the terrain which my Department occupies, pledging to me that if these inhabitants remain quietly at their affairs, you will treat them with respect in their property, persons, and religion, not molesting them in any manner; and that otherwise you will treat them as enemies and make me responsible for the blood which might be shed. As Your Lordship's communication involves several parts, it will be necessary for me to answer them according to their merits.

In regard to your Government's intimation and declaration of boundaries, I cannot agree [to this] under any condition as that line, which has been recognized by both countries ever since the time of the Spanish Government, is at another very distinct place. Even though Texas was a part of Mexico before its annexation, additional land cannot be taken [as part of Texas] without the recognition by my Government of its inclusion previously and not at the conclusion of the differences between the two Governments. As for the Río del Norte being [the boundary], as you maintain, such an acquisition, quite the contrary, should never be considered legal even though it should be effected peacefully. The people have risen *en masse* as an immoveable force to oppose the suggestion which Your Lordship has made me to surrender the Department. I cannot, I do not wish to, nor ought I, oppose their will; and, honoring their expression and my duty as General, as Governor, and as a Mexican citizen, I am placing myself at their head. I shall advance as far as Las Vegas, where I shall establish my General Headquarters. If you do not cross the Sapello River with your forces, we will negotiate this matter from the two sides and enter into a reasonable transaction, as you have offered. I fully desire, just as Your Lordship does, to save bloodshed. In case by some events its effusion cannot be avoided, none of the responsibility should be mine, for self-preservation is a natural thing, and whatever finds itself clearly attacked and its repose disturbed should accordingly resist. This is all the more necessary since I have more than enough forces to repel your aggression. I am determined to open the door to a frank discussion of the present question, and after the justice of my contention is established and the differ-

27. The version of this letter quoted by Lt. William H. Emory in his *Notes of a Military Reconnaissance* (Washington, 1848), 25, is a liberal translation and is extremely summarized. That quoted here is translated from a copy of the original, certified by Armijo's secretary, Antonio Sena, at Chihuahua, September 8, 1846.

ences resolved in conformity with the rights of man and to the honor of both nations, I shall consider Your Excellency's sentiments of peace and friendship in the spirit in which you offer them. And by the same token I offer my own in the same manner, as I wish to know your views, but it will be as I have already said, without denying the rights of my country. Captain Cooke will show Your Lordship the terms in which I have considered your recommendations. God and Liberty. Santa Fe, August 12, 1846.

M. A.

No. 3

Henry Connelly to General Manuel Armijo, Santa Fe,
August 18, 1846.²⁸

My esteemed friend:

I was informed through Doña Gertrudes Barcelo²⁹ of the situation in which you found yourself, and, with the desire of learning something of the security you might expect in the present circumstances, I at once saw Gen. Kearny. He has assured me that your person and interests are as secure as if Gen. Armijo governed. He tells me that you should Come with the troops and the close friends who accompany you, with the Armament which they carry and the Artillery, if it is possible to bring it; that at a short distance from the city you should request a parley with Gen K: It will be granted. Then you will surrender the authority of Governor and Commandant with the forces which accompany it. If Gen. Armijo wishes to be a citizen of the United States and to reside in New Mexico, [he shall] swear to uphold the laws and the constitution established by that Government. If he does not wish to be a citizen of the said states, and if he interns himself under the Mexican Government, he will be permitted to do so without oath.

Friend, the above is the truth and you may believe it in faith, without fear that any danger will result to your person or property. I advise you, my dear friend, to return to Santa Fe without delay, following the steps already indicated, and we shall have the pleasure of seeing our Friend again, safe from dangers and safe from the responsibilities of Government. I have much to tell you that is too involved and lengthy to write, and in truth I am very pleased to know that you are well. Enjoy every pleasure until you should be pleased to present yourself to Gen K. Do not fear, Gen. Armijo. For all of the above I answer with my life, as the friend which I am.

Attentive[ly] I kiss your hand,

Enrrique Conely.

28. This letter is here translated from a Spanish copy of the original, certified by Armijo's secretary, Antonio Sena, at Chihuahua, Sept. 8, 1846.

29. The notorious "La Tules," mistress and confidant of Gov. Armijo. [For a recent study and revised interpretation of Doña Tules, see Fray Angelico Chavez, "Doña Tules, Her Fame and Her Funeral," *El Palacio*, vol. 57, no. 8 (August, 1950) Ed.]

Book Reviews

Ruxton of the Rockies: Collected by Clyde and Mae Reed Porter. Edited by LeRoy R. Hafen. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1950. Pp. xxii, 325. \$5.00.

George Frederick Augustus Ruxton—Ruxton of the Rockies—has at long last been rescued from obscurity and given the rightful place he fully deserves in the history of the far American West. To Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Porter goes great credit for this happy consummation. Their search for material is a fascinating story.

In 1846-1848, this young Englishman entered Mexico at Vera Cruz, went on to Mexico City, and then penetrated directly into the frontiers of northern Mexico and the Rocky Mountain west, which the United States at that moment was acquiring from Mexico by right of conquest. Back in England within a short time after his emergence from the wilderness, he produced in record time two literary works of unusual excellence, one of which, *Life In The Far West*, was destined to be regarded as highly as the great volumes, *Wah-To-Yah*, by Louis H. Garrard, and *The Oregon Trail*, by Francis Parkman. All three of these historical classics were written under somewhat similar circumstances and almost simultaneously. And in all three instances these talented young men, their imaginations stimulated to the point of genius by the frontier, brought forth productions that will continue to be read breathlessly as long as men enjoy romance and adventure.

In the case of Ruxton very little was known until recently, since his career was cut short by his early death at St. Louis, in 1848. Determined to fill in this unfortunate gap, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Porter set to work some years ago with little success until 1947, when they began to strike "pay dirt." At that time Mrs. Porter, while in England, was fortunate to locate members of the Ruxton family who graciously gave her a wealth of useable material—much of it autobiographical in nature—that gave a full account of the hectic life of

the young adventurer. With this material she returned to America, where she and Mr. Porter and Dr. Leroy R. Hafen, as editor, produced this most readable and illuminating volume.

In so far as possible Ruxton is allowed to tell his intriguing story in full—chapter six through sixteen being lifted bodily from his *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains* (London, 1847)—with the exception of the use of selected extracts in chapters six and seven. An excellent story has resulted and a real service has been rendered to the history of the west.

“Aside from his diplomatic and commercial mission, Ruxton’s venture in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains was largely motivated by his keen desire to visit these strange remote lands, hunt in the wilderness of the American West, and subsequently write about his experiences and observations.” Whatever his status, the fact that he was unusually well supplied with money and was able to influence officials and win consideration beyond his personal needs, tends to show that he was engaged in something more than merely a trip of personal adventure.

Mr. and Mrs. Porter and Dr. Hafen have done their work well, and Ruxton stands out vividly as the dynamic, adventurous, resourceful and talented young man that he was. In retrospect, however, his observations of the character of the Mexican men seem to be unduly severe.

This life story of one of the most magnetic and interesting characters ever to flash across the Southwest and Rocky Mountain-West deserves to take, and will take a prominent place in the field of *Americana*. Defects are minor. A few maps would have enhanced greatly the value of the volume, and a more extensive use of annotations would have been a luxury to the serious student of the American West. Dr. Hafen explains in his splendid *foreword*, however, that the book is planned for “a wide popular audience rather than a limited scholarly one.”

Mrs. Porter has written a captivating *introduction*, and the poem, “Ruxton Creek,” by Thomas Hornsby Ferril, will fire the imagination and excite the anticipation of any lover

of the great west, be he ever so satiated. The volume is interestingly illustrated with the only known picture of Ruxton extant, with Ruxton's own sketches and with Alfred Jacob Miller's famous paintings. The index is quite adequate, and naturally it is a most handsome volume, produced as it is by the University of Oklahoma Press.

R. H. OGLE

Phoenix Union High Schools
and Phoenix College

Florentine Codex. General History of the Things of New Mexico by Fray Bernadino de Sahagun. Book 1—The Gods. Translated from the Aztec into English, with Notes and Illustrations. Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble. In 13 Parts. Part II. School of American Research and the University of Utah. Monographs of the School of American Research, No. 14, Part II. Santa Fe, 1950.

The student of ancient Mexico in contrast to the student, say, of the Near East, has certain disadvantages, but one most important advantage; he has not the wealth of archival material in historical sculpture and writing left by the ancient civilizations of the latter region, but, to offset that lack, he has eyewitness accounts of how civilization functioned in Mexico when the white man arrived. Of those eyewitnesses Fray Bernadino de Sahagun, who as a young man reached Mexico in 1529 and remained there until his death in 1590, was far and away the best.

Father Sahagun was a born student of man, and Evelyn's description of Samuel Pepys—"A very worthy, industrious, and curious person"—might well be applied to him. His approach was in many respects that of the twentieth century: he assembled Indians and discussed ethnology with them, getting the material straight from their lips. Indeed, much of Sahagun's *Historia* was actually written in Nahuatl by his informants, although revised and annotated by him. A paraphrase in Spanish of the Nahuatl original was made by Sahagun, and it is that version which has been published on more than one occasion (best edition: Robredo, Mexico City,

1938). The Spanish paraphrase, however, lacks much of the color of the original; the rich metaphors and poetry of the Nahua setting and not a little factual material are absent. One might say that the Spanish version bears the same relationship to the Nahua as a children's edition of *Gulliver's Travels* does to Swift's original satire.

Parts of the Nahua original have been translated, but it is not until now that a full translation into a modern language has been undertaken. This is an extremely arduous labor precisely because of the rich veins of poetry and metaphor in the original and the abundance of esoteric material on Mexican religion. All historians and ethnologists are therefore deeply indebted to Messrs. Anderson and Dibble for making available these most important source materials. The reviewer, having no knowledge of the Nahua language, cannot pass judgment on the merits of the translation, but he is confident that the work is in excellent hands, for the authors are outstanding scholars of Nahua. The twelve books of the *Historia* will be published one by one and not necessarily in their original order; a final part will contain table of contents, index, introduction, etc.

This is a "must" for every library and individual interested in Latin America.

J. ERIC S. THOMPSON

Carnegie Institution of Washington,

Jesuit Beginnings in New Mexico 1867-1882. M. Lilliana Owens. El Paso, Texas: Revista Catolica Press, 1950. Pp. 176.

This study is divided into three parts with a foreword by Edwin V. Byrne, Archbishop of Santa Fe, and an introduction by Carlos Castañeda, The University of Texas. Part One is Sister Lilliana's narrative of Jesuit work in New Mexico and Colorado, beginning with Bishop Lamy's trip to Europe and the assignment there of Jesuit workers for New Mexico.

The Second Part is the *Account of the Journey of Reverend Donato M. Gasparri, S.J., to New Mexico in 1867.*

This "account was dictated by Father Donato M. Gasparri, S.J., in Spanish to Father Vito M. Tromby, S.J. It was translated into Italian for the records of the Neapolitan Province and appeared in the *Lettere Edificanti*" * * * "*della Provincia Napoletana della Compagnia di Gesu*, Serie V, 1886-1887, Naples, 1886, pp. 170-176." The publication here presented was translated from the Italian by Sister Lilliana and associates. An earlier translation by J. Manuel Espinosa has been published in *Mid-America*, vol. 20, new series vol. 9 (January, 1938).

The Third Part is the *Diary of the Mission of New Mexico*, May 27, 1867-October 18, 1874. It narrates the story of the trip from New York to Santa Fe, between May and August of 1867, and then becomes a weekly summary of church work in the Albuquerque area. The original was written in Spanish, but is presented in translation. From internal evidence, Sister Lilliana credits the authorship to Reverend Livio Vigilante, S.J., the first superior of the Jesuit New Mexico mission band.

The publication is completed with a bibliography, index, and pictures of leading persons in the story and of places.

The *Account*, the *Diary*, and Sister Lilliana's narrative relate a familiar story of perils experienced by travelers along the Santa Fe trail. These pioneer Jesuits faced an Indian attack, inclement weather, and the harshness of travel in those days with unflinching courage. Their journey was saddened by the untimely death of Sister Alphonsa Thompson, not yet twenty years of age. The *Account* also contains the European side of the story.

The *Diary* is the more important of the two documents. Although on the surface it seems to be a weekly summary of routine work, for one acquainted with the Albuquerque environment much can be read between the lines. Behind the terse statements of the author, the reader catches glimpses of life in the Middle Rio Grande valley three-quarters of a century ago which is in sharp contrast with the present-day condition.

In passing, it might be noted that there are some imperfections in the editorial work. An occasional item in the foot-

note does not appear in the bibliography. The footnote style is not uniform: a work is sometimes cited by author and later by title. Nor is the title always exactly the same in footnote and bibliography. The title of Twitchell's standard history of New Mexico is given incorrectly, a not uncommon error.

Professor Castañeda's statement (page 13) on the number of settlers killed in New Mexico at the time of the Pueblo rebellion of 1680 is too high.

The excessively long two-and-a-half page paragraph beginning on page 24 should have been avoided from the standpoint of style. Otherwise, Sister Lilliana writes with a clear pen and with a feeling for the subject that adds much to what could have been a rather dry enumeration of factual information. A sympathetic reader can glean much more from the story than appears on the surface.

The title page is headed: JESUIT STUDIES—SOUTHWEST, Number One. It is to be hoped that Number Two will not lag far behind; this one is an excellent contribution to the historical literature of the region. F. D. R.

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