

MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO

OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TESTS AND ETHNOHISTORIC RESEARCH
AT LA 74220, AN EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY SHEEP CAMP NEAR OCATE,
MORA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

by

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ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

LA 74220, an historic site consisting of four small rock-walled enclosures and associated debris, was the focus of a field testing program, an archival records search, and an ethnohistoric field interview program.

The site lies within the western right-of-way of NM 120, approximately 12 km north of the village of Ocate, in northeastern New Mexico. The field testing program, which evaluated the condition, depositional history and environment, and age of the archaeological structures and associated deposits, was conducted between December 18 and December 20, 1990, by Sarah Schlanger and Laurel Wallace of the Office of Archaeological Studies, Museum of New Mexico. Following a determination that the structures were in use at some time between A.D. 1880 and A.D. 1930, the OAS initiated an ethnohistoric research program to establish the ownership and use history of the structures. Linda Goodman of the Office of Archaeological Studies carried out this program between January 29, 1991, and March 31, 1991, with an additional day of interviewing on August 28, 1991.

The four historic structures investigated during the field work were probably sheep pens or other holding areas for treating livestock. These structures contained a shallow deposit of artifacts, including fragments of glass jars, barbed wire, nails, saw-butchered bone, and metal food cans. Interviews with local informants and archival research confirmed the identification of these structures with livestock husbandry, but failed to establish ownership of the four small pens. The ethnohistoric research program did reveal a substantial body of information about their historic context and folk lifeways in the rural village of Ocate and its environs. The archaeological structures were built and used during a period of considerable economic and social change in the Ocate area.

In the early nineteenth century, Ocate and its neighboring villages were recognized as part of the Mora Land Grant. The local economy was based on a combination of subsistence agriculture and family-based sheep and cattle husbandry on graze belonging to the commons. In the mid-nineteenth century, this lifeway was challenged as the Mora Land Grant was partitioned and converted to private ownership under the control of Anglo ranchers and business consortiums. By A.D. 1916, the former common lands were largely in private hands, and the local economy shifted to one of migratory labor, with men seeking jobs outside the valley in timbering, mining, shepherding, and railroading. By the A.D. 1930s, the locally controlled livestock industry was no longer functioning; with the advent of World War II, and greater opportunities for wage-labor in cities far from Ocate, the community was stripped of its labor force and the local economy became moribund. LA 74220 appears to have been established sometime after A.D. 1880, when the struggles to maintain common lands were at a peak, and was probably abandoned before A.D. 1940, after the folk lifeways of the entire area foundered under the impact of external economic pressures.

LA 74220 is important because it documents the presence of sheep raising activities in Manueles Canyon and illustrates the type and location of a site used during seasonal migration of sheep in the Ocate region. LA 74220 was utilized when moving sheep between summer and winter ranges.

Study of LA 74220 has taken the form of archaeological testing and ethnohistoric examination. Because more specific data regarding this site are not available, no additional investigation is recommended.

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PART I. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRAM

by Sarah H. Schlanger

INTRODUCTION

The New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department (NMSHTD) plans to pave the section of NM 120 that runs through Manueles Canyon between Ocate and Black Lake. This will entail rerouting the existing road in several places, making smaller adjustments in road alignment in other places, and widening the roadbed in general. A Class III cultural resources survey conducted by Mr. G. Robert Phippen, Jr., of Mariah Associates, Inc., for the NMSHTD (Phippen 1989), located one isolated find (a low rock wall built on the downslope side of a shallow, excavated pit), and one site, LA 74220. The site was the focus of the testing, archival research, and interview program described in this report.

The Site Setting

LA 74220 is a small site composed of four semicircular dry-laid rock alignments on a narrow, east-facing terrace overlooking Manueles Creek, some 12 km northwest of the village of Ocate, in Manueles Canyon (Fig. 1). Manueles Creek runs approximately 200 m to the west. The site is bounded on the east by the road-cut bank for NM 120, and is limited to the widest section of the terrace surface on the west, north, and south. The southern boundary of the site is a short drainage, now truncated on the west by a graded road leading up to Ocate Mesa. The road rises up along the west side of LA 74220 and is stabilized by large basalt boulders. The slope leading down to the terrace from this road is littered with loose boulders, particularly vesicular basalt. The entire terrace pinches out just north of Feature 4, the northernmost of the four rock enclosures.

The site is heavily vegetated at present with a variety of grasses, clover, small composites, and wild raspberry forming an understory for ponderosa pine, spruce, and oakbrush. Oakbrush leaves and pine needles form a thick duff layer over the site. The soil at the site is a dark, rich organic A horizon and a highly leached, lateritic B horizon characteristic of soils developed under conditions of good moisture and drainage and climatic conditions favoring a cold-adapted pine and spruce vegetation.

Manueles Canyon cuts through a Quaternary basalt-andesite flow on its way to the broad basin surrounding Ocate. In the vicinity of the site, the canyon is only 100 m to 200 m wide, and the eastern canyon wall presents an almost sheer face rising to Laguna Salada Mesa. The western wall is fronted by landslides that create a more uneven, but gradual slope from the valley bottom to the valley's edge, and then up to Ocate Mesa. The terrace on which the site is situated may be a river terrace, now downcut by Manueles Creek, 120 m to the east, or it may be a slump terrace created by a landslide. The west slope of Manueles Canyon is drained by numerous well-entrenched, narrow, intermittent drainages; the east wall is virtually unbroken.

R.17 E.

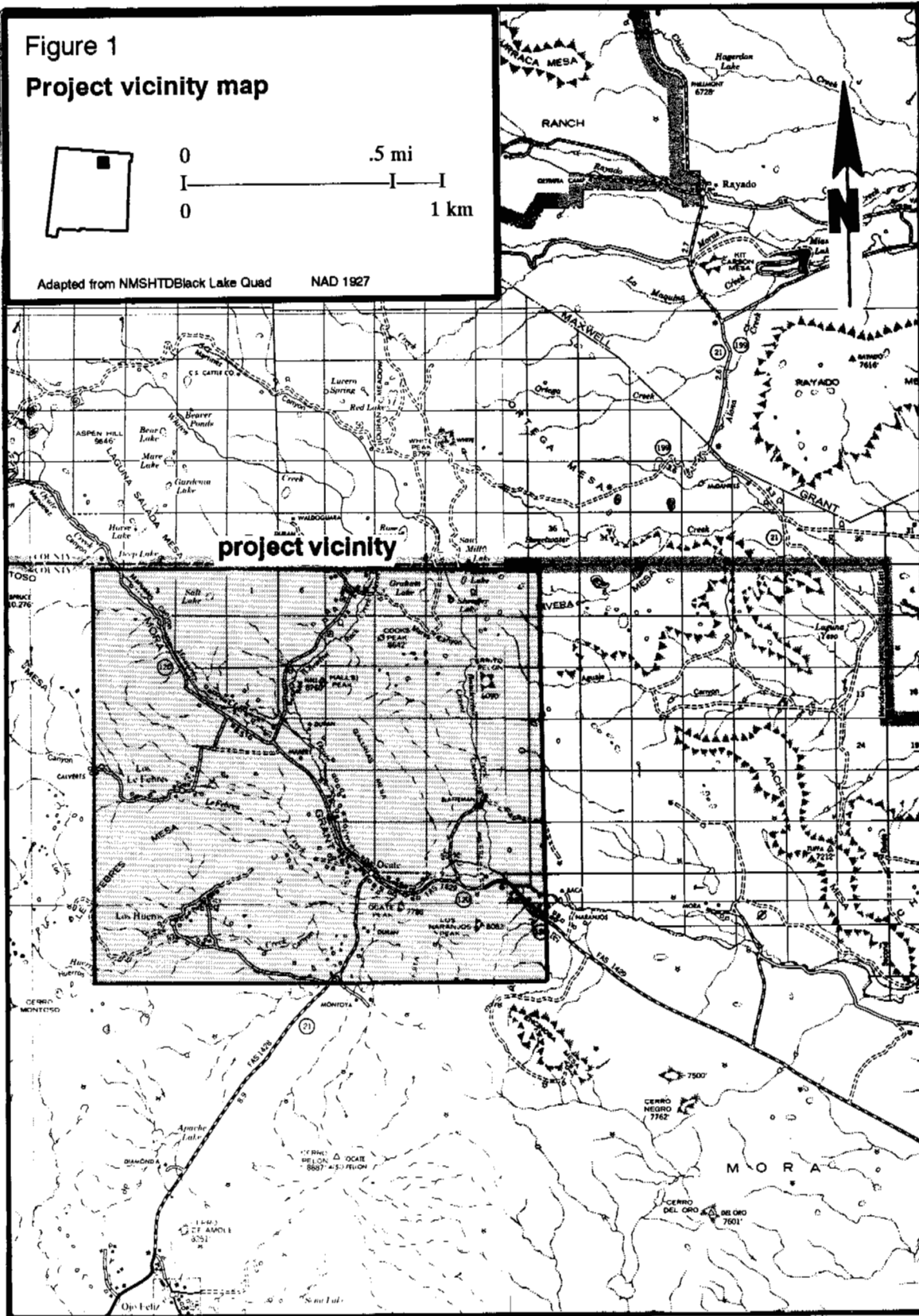
R.18 E.

R.19 E.

Figure 1
Project vicinity map



Adapted from NMSHTD Black Lake Quad NAD 1927



T.25 N.

T.24 N.

T.23 N.

T.22 N.

A Brief Overview of Prehistoric and Historic Occupations in the Study Area

Manueles Canyon lies at the very easternmost extension of the mountain and plateau topography typical of northern New Mexico. Immediately to the southeast and east begin the Southern Plains, while to the north rise the Sangre de Cristos Mountains, the southern extension of the American Rockies. The plateaus, the mountains, and the plains have long attracted people to their hunting, their arable lands, and their ample grasslands. The small stone shelters at LA 74220 could have been built by Paleoindian hunters as early as 9500 B.C. The structures at LA 74220 follow such a general architectural pattern that they could have been built any time during the prehistoric occupation of the area. If they were built as livestock shelters, or shelters for shepherders or cattlemen working their herds, they would have been erected sometime between A.D. 1786, when the Comanches signed a peace treaty with the Spanish of northeastern New Mexico, and the 1940s, when severe local droughts, a declining market for sheep, and the imposition of the conditions of the 1934 Taylor Grazing Act resulted in severe reductions in stockholdings in the Ocate area and elsewhere across the western United States.

The sequence of prehistoric and historic occupations of northeastern New Mexico have been reviewed and discussed by Cordell (1979), Glassow (1980), Stuart and Gauthier (1981), Thoms (1976), and Winter (1988), whose work is presented below in brief. The historic occupation of the Ocate area and Manueles Canyon itself will be presented in greater detail later in this report.

The Paleoindian Occupation

The earliest evidence for human occupation in northeastern New Mexico falls during the Paleoindian period, circa 9500 B.C. to 5500 B.C. The eastern foothills of the Sangre de Cristos have yielded a variety of stone projectile points from this long period, during which the hunters focused on now-extinct Pleistocene fauna, including mammoth, horse, camel, and bison. The narrow, high elevation canyon traced by Manueles Creek is an unlikely spot for a mammoth, horse, or camel kill site because it lacks the grassland resources favored by these species. The canyon would have been a good location for a deer, elk, or mountain sheep hunt, especially when these animals were descending to lower elevations in the winter, or were moving to higher elevations in the summer.

The Archaic Occupation

Between the end of the Paleoindian period, marked by the extermination or extinction of the larger Pleistocene fauna, and the inception of small village life focused on small-scale farming, the inhabitants of northeastern New Mexico lived by hunting modern game species and by gathering a variety of plant resources. This period, the Archaic, persisted from about 5500 B.C. to A.D. 400. The time period in general is distinguished archaeologically by a lack of pottery and by a lack of substantial architecture.

The Formative Occupation

Prehistoric farmers occupied portions of northeastern New Mexico and the adjacent margins of the Plains from A.D. 400 until about A.D. 1300, when the area was abandoned and populations concentrated in large villages along the Río Grande, the Cimarron, the Red, the Pecos, the Arkansas, the Canadian, and the other rivers draining east across the Southern Plains. From the beginning of this period until the end, some people lived in rather small groups of one to two families and subsisted on a combination of hunting, gathering, and farming. Domestic structures were characterized by a combination of masonry, adobe, and slab-lined or slab-footed adobe walls. Special-purpose structures, such as hunting blinds, are not well known, but could have encompassed a variety of forms, including the dry-laid stone walls found at LA 74220.

Until A.D. 1200, the archaeological record shows that the residents of northeastern New Mexico operated in a manner that incorporated aspects of both the Anasazi tradition, to the west, and the Panhandle Plains tradition to the east. Around A.D. 1200, however, large, multiroom masonry and adobe pueblos more typical of the Anasazi architectural tradition were being constructed in northeastern New Mexico. The focus of the Panhandle Plains tradition shifted further to the east, where large riverside villages of noncontiguous, single-room adobe and masonry houses were established. Villagers permanently settled along the Río Grande or the rivers of the Plains and could easily have made hunting and collecting forays to the mountains and foothill zones, establishing temporary camps and shelters similar to the stone enclosures found at LA 74220.

The Historic Occupation

At the time of historic contact, northeastern New Mexico was home to a number of Apachean groups who practiced a lifeway revolving around casual horticulture, hunting, and gathering. Some of the Apaches practiced village sedentism, while others exhibited a more nomadic mode, hunting bison on the margins of the Plains and trading (and raiding) the more sedentary agricultural villagers of the Río Grande and the Plains rivers. Either nomadic or more sedentary Apaches could have used temporary shelters such as the stone enclosures at LA 74220. Their well-established raiding tradition, which became more of an economic focus after the introduction of the horse, kept Hispanic settlers out of the area until after the Comanche Peace of A.D. 1786. The valleys east of the Río Grande, including the study area, were not entered until around A.D. 1800. Spanish settlers from Trampas, Embudo, and Picuris created the small villages, now largely abandoned, that dot the Ocate area today. These villages relied on agriculture and animal husbandry initially; later, logging, ranching, and wage work would supplant the local subsistence economy. It is unlikely that these villagers would have established temporary hunting or gathering camps along Manueles Creek. They could have established overnight camps and pens associated with herding, however. Further details of the historic occupation are given in the sections devoted to the ethnohistoric research program.

PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK

The stone structures at LA 74220 are similar in construction to those reported from the vicinity of Las Vegas, New Mexico, by Wiseman (1975). Wiseman describes 12 stone enclosures at LA 4939, Sitio Creston. These enclosures were built atop a saddle overlooking a small intermittent stream, in a setting not unlike that found at LA 74220. Like LA 74220, Sitio Creston is located in a ponderosa pine woods, on rocky, shallow soils. Wiseman's description of the structures and their construction is strikingly similar to that of LA 74220:

The stone structures are all approximately the same size and shape. Interior dimensions range from two to four meters, and the outside diameters are an additional one-half to three meters....Large, medium, and small tabular and blocky field stones gathered in the vicinity of the site were either piled *en masse* or, in some instances, in dry-laid masonry technique to form roughly circular walls. Where possible or convenient, bedrock exposures were incorporated in the walls. Some of the structures are sketchily defined by a single line of rocks whereas others are well defined with walls remaining to heights of a meter or so....Entries are not generally indicated nor are they deemed to have been necessary (Wiseman 1975:84).

Wiseman's excavations located prepared floors in three structures, with bedrock and earth floors present in the remainder of the features. Hearths were in three of the structures. The artifact inventory at Sitio Creston contained tools and cores of both local and imported stone, including projectile points, drills, and knives, single-hand manos and basin metates, hammerstones, and a variety of sherds. No firmly dated ceramic types were found, nor were radiocarbon determinations available for Sitio Creston charcoal. Wiseman estimates, however, that the site was occupied between A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1150. The site evidently served as a base camp for a small party of four to five families as they hunted and gathered local resources.

LA 74220 was tentatively identified by Phippen in 1989 as a set of four prehistoric hunting blinds, each about 1-2 m in diameter. The single artifact observed on the site surface, a "crimped seam lard can," indicated that the site had seen some use in recent times, but the form of the enclosures suggested that they were constructed during an earlier, prehistoric occupation. Because it appeared that at least 20 cm of deposit might be present within the confines of the rock enclosures, testing was recommended to determine the nature and extent of archaeological deposits.

THE FIELD TESTING PROGRAM

Field testing at LA 74220 was conducted on December 18, 19, and 20, 1990, by Sarah Schlanger and Laurel Wallace. The site and the four structures were mapped with reference to a 4-m-grid system that utilized the Phippen survey site marker as a master datum (Fig. 2).

Surface Materials

A surface inspection recovered three sections of barbed wire, a baking powder can fragment, and a food can fragment (Fig. 2). The baking can fragment is the same artifact as the "crimped seam lard can" previously located by the Mariah Associates survey. These are described more fully later in the report. A heavy pine-needle and leaf duff obscured most of the ground surface and may have masked additional artifacts.

Auger Testing

The surface inspection was followed by auger testing at 4-m intervals, at the points established during gridding and mapping. This augering program revealed that the sediments deposited at the site were generally shallow. The auger tests reached a depth of 0.85 m south of Feature 3 and west of Feature 2, where deposits were relatively thick, but could only be driven 0.05 m between Features 1 and 4, where deposits consisted of a very thin layer of decomposing bedrock, needles, and leaf duff. The thickest deposits within one of the structures were contained within the rock enclosure designated as Feature 3; here sediments filled a natural declivity, and were also retained behind the dry-laid rock wall. These deposits reached a depth of approximately 0.4 m; below this depth, the auger tests encountered the sterile, red soil.

The Four Rock Enclosures

Each of the four features at LA 74220 are constructed in the same way. In each case, a dry-laid, two- to three-course masonry wall marks the downhill section of a 4- to 5-m-diameter enclosure that uses the slope rising to the west of the terrace as a natural back wall. The sections of the enclosure perimeter that were not walled with dry-laid rock were fenced by stringing barbed wire between oakbrush and ponderosa pine trunks left along the perimeter after clearing the enclosure center of brush.

Feature 1

Feature 1 (Fig. 3) is the easternmost of the four rock enclosures at LA 74220. The eastern margin of this features rests just at the top of the roadcut for NM 120, which suggests that some

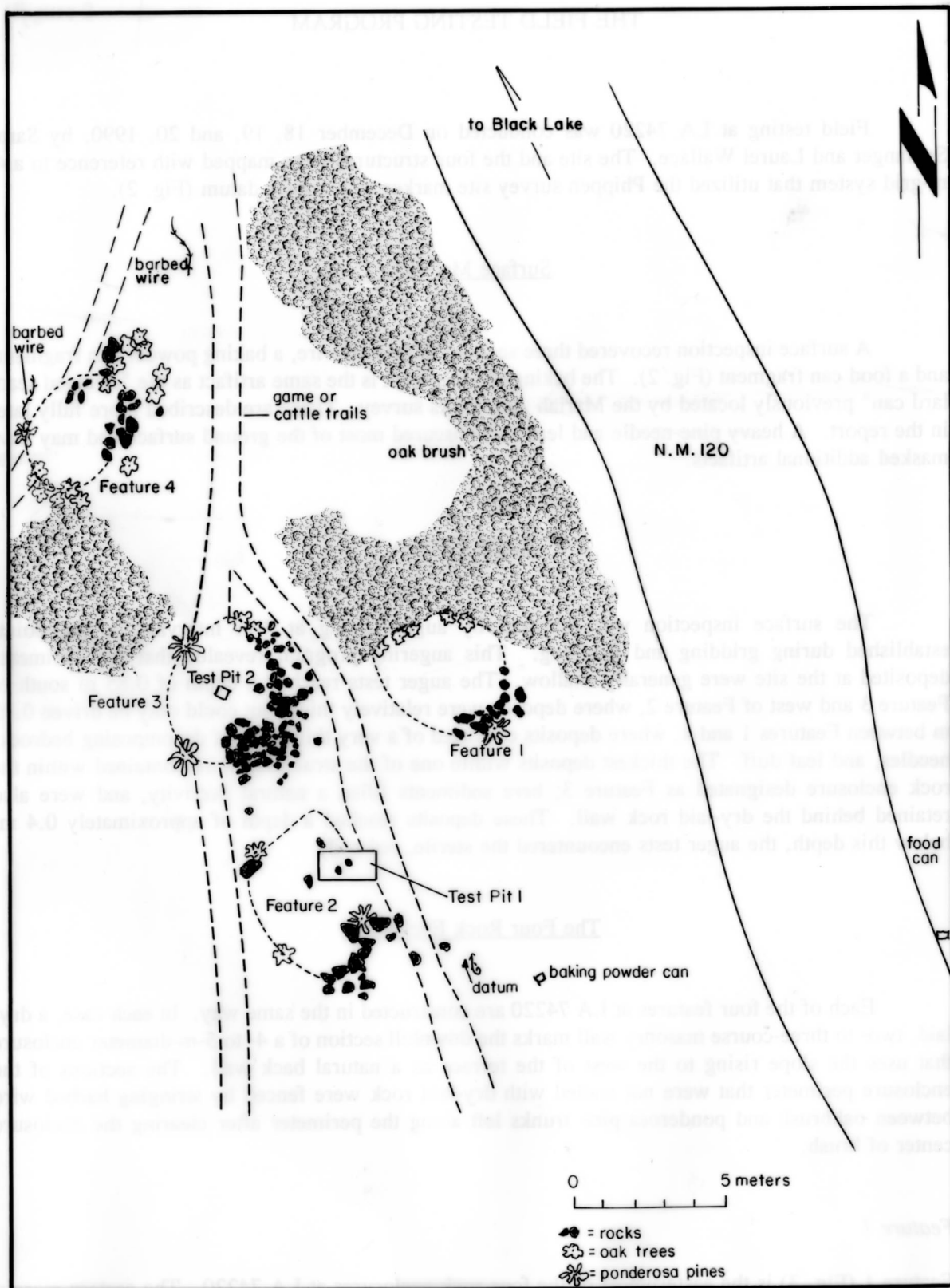


Figure 2. Plan map, LA 74220. Note Features 1, 2, 3, and 4 (stone enclosures), trails, site mapping datum, barbed wire, and cans. Site LA 74220 lies entirely within the proposed right-of-way.



Figure 3. Feature 1, LA 74220.

features at LA 74220 may have been removed during previous road widening or maintenance activities along this curve. Feature 1 is nearly circular, with a single course of rocks defining the southeast portion of the enclosure. The remaining feature outline is suggested by a slight depression and the absence of trees of any kind from the center of the feature. The northern boundary is defined by six oakbrush trunks. Evidently the feature was constructed to take advantage of the oakbrush as a retaining wall or posts for anchoring barbed wire or some other fencing material. Feature 1 measures 4 m east to west and 4 m north to south. No artifacts were found in association with this enclosure.

Feature 2

Feature 2 is the southernmost of the four enclosures. The southeastern quarter of the enclosure wall is clearly delineated by a dry-laid basalt cobble wall (Fig. 4). This wall is generally two courses high, and was constructed of cobbles and boulders 20 cm or more in greatest dimension. A gap in the stones may indicate a possible doorway. Alternatively, the rocks may have been unnecessary here because of the fortuitous presence of a ponderosa pine. The depression associated with this feature is somewhat irregular in form, and appears to define a rough rectangle, 5 m north to south by 3.5 m east to west. The north, east, and west margins of the feature may have been secured by barbed wire anchored to oakbrush trunks. Artifacts recovered in Test 1 are described in further detail below.



Figure 4. Feature 2, LA 74220.

Our test excavation reveals that the stone alignments represent rocks piled on the ground surface; there are no buried courses nor are the rocks anchored in a foundation trench. The lack of rock fall downslope from the alignments further suggests that the walls were originally built to a height of about .5 m. The highest point on the existing wall at Feature 2 stands 0.46 m above the exterior ground surface.

Feature 3

Feature 3 (Fig. 5) sits at the center of the site, just west of Feature 1. The rock wall at this feature forms the entire east boundary; the depression that marks the remainder of the feature is relatively deep and sharply bounded by the uphill slope. Feature 3 contains more rock than the other four enclosures, and is further distinguished by a cairn or other "pilelike" construction at the southern margin of the enclosure. This cairn was dismantled during testing; it contained four to five crude courses of piled stone, averaging around 15 cm in diameter. No mortar was present, and only a very slight suggestion of coursing was discernable. The cairn may have served to anchor a post; no wood was present in the feature at the time of our investigations, however. The shovel test in the center of the feature yielded no artifactual materials.

Feature 4

Feature 4 (Fig. 6) is the northernmost of the four features, and shows most clearly how the rough rock enclosures were augmented by barbed wire strands to bring the height of the enclosure up above

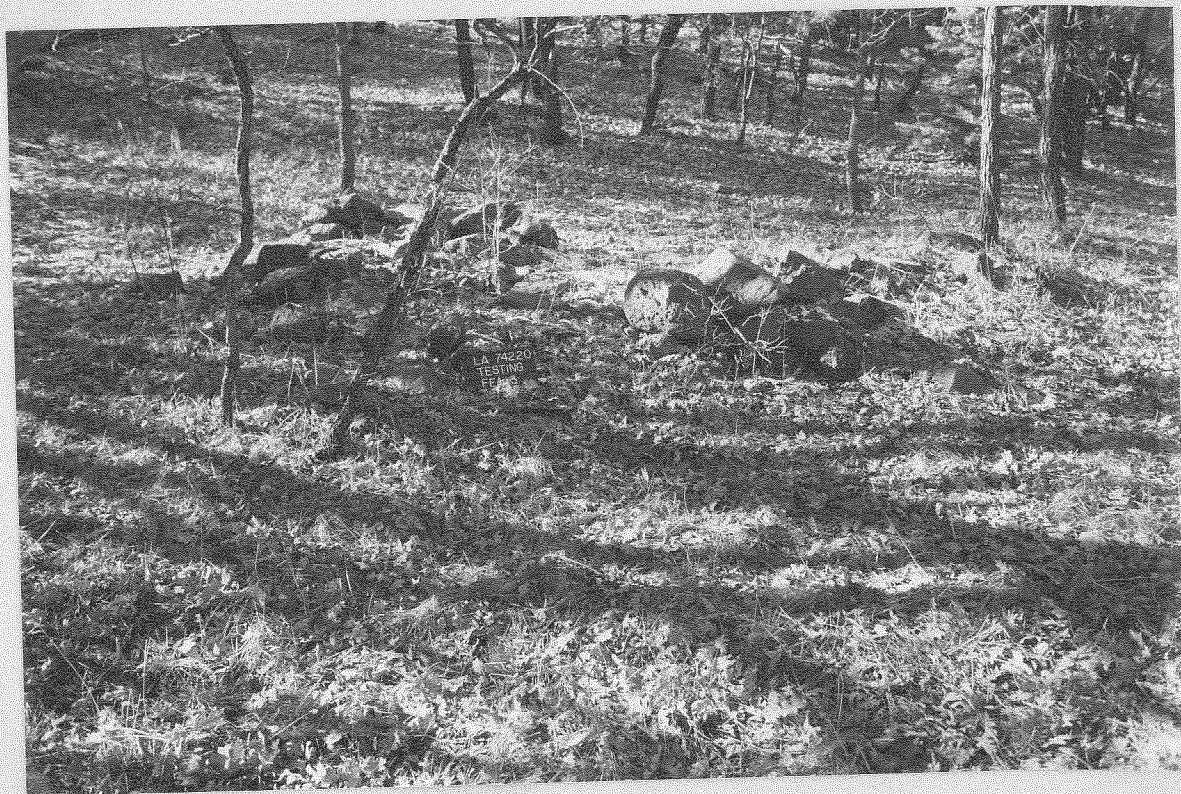


Figure 5. Feature 3, LA 74220.



Figure 6. Feature 4, LA 74220.

0.5 m. The rock wall associated with this feature runs only along the eastern margin of the enclosure. The southwest quarter was fenced with barbed wire, a short section of which was still present in its original position anchored to a ponderosa pine. Barbed wire probably also ran from oakbrush trunk to trunk to complete the enclosure.

Trails

Two trails pass through LA 74220 (Fig. 2). Both cut off from the road just north of the site, with one branching almost immediately to head southwest and uphill, and the other following the terrace or bench on which LA 74220 is located. The trail heading uphill is a cutoff that leads to the unnumbered road passing behind LA 74220 on the way up to Ocate Mesa. This trail passes through Feature 4. The other trail appears to follow a contour along the terrace. It also splits, with one branch continuing through Feature 3 and skirting Feature 2 on the west, and the other skirting Feature 2 on the east.

Both trails appear to be used presently by both game and cattle. The presence of the trails in the vicinity of the rock enclosures reinforces the suggestion that these structures were related to livestock husbandry.

Test Excavation Units

Two excavation units, Test 1 and Test 2, were used to determine stratigraphic sequences within the rock enclosures.

Test 1

Test 1 consists of a 1-by-2-m test pit placed across the probable wall line of Feature 2 (Fig. 7). This test was oriented in such a way as to reveal the stratigraphy present both inside and outside the structure. The ground surface here slopes considerably downward from the western edge of the test unit to approximately the center of the unit, where the structure boundary lies. From the center of the unit to the eastern edge, the ground slopes down at a shallower angle. The unit was excavated in 10-cm arbitrary levels; all material was screened through ¼-inch mesh hardware cloth.

The upper 2 to 5 cm of deposit in the unit consisted of needle and leaf duff. Below this, the sediment consists of a black, friable root zone, rich in organic materials. This layer contained all the artifactual material collected from the unit. Depth of this deposit varied from 5 cm at the east end of the unit to about 10 cm just inside the projected structure wall line. Below this root zone is a thin layer of block gray clay that contains some charred twigs. This layer, 5 cm in maximum depth, appears to relate to an old fire or burn and subsequent accelerated slope wash episodes. Beneath this layer is the sterile, reddish, lateritic B horizon of the forest soil. The west half of the test unit revealed sterile, red, lateritic soil at a depth of 10 cm below the sloping ground surface. The red sterile sediments were encountered at a depth of 7 to 9 cm below the ground surface in the east half of the unit. The stratigraphy present was identical across the unit and no breaks could be detected



Figure 7. Test 1, LA 74220.

that corresponded with the projected wall line. Artifacts recovered from this unit include a fragment of butchered bone, bottle or jar glass, wire nails, and a fence staple. These materials are described in greater detail below.

Test 2

The second test, Test 2, was excavated into the center of Feature 3. This test, a 30-by-30-cm shovel test, revealed a similar stratigraphic profile. All materials removed from the test to a depth of 40 cm were screened through ¼-inch mesh hardware cloth; no artifacts were recovered. The test unit was extended to a depth of 80 cm by using the soil auger. The auger hole showed the same sequence of root zone, blocky gray clay and red, lateritic soil found in Test 1 and elsewhere at the site.

ARTIFACT ASSEMBLAGE

The artifact assemblage recovered from LA 74220 is very small. The site surface was inspected for artifacts during site mapping operations and five artifacts were collected from atop the heavy duff layer before subsurface testing began. These artifacts include samples of barbed wire and two tin cans.

Subsurface testing added bottle glass, a wire pail handle, and a piece of saw-cut or saw-butchered bone to the artifact assemblage recovered during surface collection. Taken together with the form and construction methods used in building the various features at the site, these materials identify LA 74220 as a short-term camp associated with herding and animal husbandry. The features themselves were probably animal pens; the domestic refuse suggests that these pens and the shelter that their low walls provided may have served as the focal point for occasional short-term human habitation and camping at the site as well.

The test excavations provided sufficient materials to place the major part of the site occupation between A.D. 1880 and 1930. The total artifact inventory was small and each of the artifacts is described individually below. All artifacts except the bone specimen were examined and identified by Guadalupe A. Martinez (OAS). The bone specimen was examined by Linda Mick-O'Hara (OAS).

Wire

The wire inventory at LA 74220 included three barbed-wire samples and a wire pail handle. The barbed-wire samples come from the site surface (or somewhat above the site surface in one case, where a sample of wire was taken from a strand wrapped around a tree trunk). The wire pail handle was collected from the uppermost 10-cm level in Test Unit 1, Feature 2.

The three barbed-wire samples exhibit a total of four barbed-wire types. One sample consists of a section of Glidden's Coil, double strand, looped, through a section of Burnell's three-point wire. This piece has a loop end formed by joining the two wire types, and may represent a gate loop or other fastener for a pen or larger enclosure. Patent dates on these types are February 8, 1876, and June 19, 1877, respectively, and so place the use of these materials no earlier than the late 1870s.

A second sample of barbed wire collected from the site surface was also Burnell's three-point wire. This sample came from a 4-m long strand of wire at the north end of the site. The fourth wire type was Ross's four-point wire, a wire patented in 1879. This wire sample was taken from a section wrapped around the trunk of an oak at the uphill margin of Feature 4.

At present, we have no data on when manufacture ceased on these barbed-wire types, and the date range provided by the presence of these specimens cannot be narrower than A.D. 1880 to the present. Metallurgical assays may identify properties of the metals used in the various wires, allowing us to place their manufacture more exactly in time.

Nails

Two nails were collected from subsurface deposits in Test Unit 1, Feature 2. Both were common nails, manufactured using a cut-wire technique. This technique comes in to use in the A.D. 1850s and continues to be used today. One of the specimens is an 8d (pennyweight) nail; the other is a 10d nail. The smaller nail point was never properly stamped out, although the context suggests that the nail was used in some sort of construction at this site.

Staples

One wire staple, a fence staple, was found in subsurface deposits, Test Unit 1, Feature 2. This staple was also manufactured via the cut-wire technique, and must have been made after the A.D. 1850s. Staples of this type continue to be manufactured today. A metallurgical analysis may reveal properties of the staple metal that would help to place the manufacture date more exactly.

Glass

Two small glass fragments were retrieved from subsurface deposits in Test Unit 1, Feature 2. One of these fragments is clear glass, with no intrusions or manufacturing defects, and probably came from a bottle manufactured within the past 50 years. The other fragment comes from a bottle manufactured from amethyst glass, or glass that purples with exposure to the sun. This kind of glass was used in bottle production between A.D. 1880 and A.D. 1920. Although the bottle may have been introduced to LA 74220 after A.D. 1920, the manufacturing dates for this type of glass suggest that the site was in use at least sometime between A.D. 1880 and 1920.

Tinned Steel Cans

Two can fragments were present in the surface artifact assemblage associated with LA 74220. Both are tinned steel food cans. One, collected from the east road shoulder across from the site itself, is a sanitary-type can that had been opened with a keystrip opener. Paint or other decorative treatment on the outside surface of this can has left a golden sheen; no details of the decoration can be distinguished. This type of can has been manufactured since A.D. 1904. The second can is a baking powder container with a replaceable circular external friction lid (a slip-on top, rather than a push-in plug-type lid). The lock-side seam used to form the can body identifies it as a can manufactured between A.D. 1850 and 1930.

Bone

A single bone fragment was recovered from subsurface deposits in Test Unit 1, Feature 2, just at the contact between the darker, more organically rich sediment, and the orange sterile sediments. This fragment is a metapodial diaphysis fragment from *Ovis/Capra*. It exhibits a saw-cut face on the distal aspect of the bone. Butchering with saws is an historic European practice; the presence of this butchering technique at LA 74220 supports the identification of this site as an historic camp.

SUMMARY OF EXCAVATION FINDINGS

The excavation findings suggest that LA 74220 is an historic animal husbandry location. The site consists of four circular pens located at the junction of NM 120 and what is now a Forest Service road that leads up to Ocate Mesa and summer range. This section of NM 120 runs along Manueles Creek, in a narrow, constricted canyon that would have provided limited winter graze, but a good trail between the highlands and the lower winter graze around Ocate and the lowlands of the Mora Grant. NM 120 connects Ocate with Black Lake to the north; from Black Lake, access to the low-lying sections of the Mora Grant can be gained by following Coyote Creek to the south. All in all, the site is located at an excellent place for culling or treating animals before and after moving the herd from one range to the next.

The site appears to have been in use during the first few decades of the twentieth century, and may have been in use somewhat earlier, circa the 1880s. The presence of domestic refuse, including butchered bone, food cans, and bottle glass, also indicates that the place was used as a temporary camp or resting place where meals were taken during the drive.

The limited testing program and ethnohistorical investigations reported here have exhausted the research potential of this site. The location is not likely to yield information beyond what has been documented to date, and no additional investigations are recommended.

PART 2. THE ETHNOHISTORY PROGRAM

by Linda J. Goodman

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Several people were most helpful in seeing this portion of the project to completion. Steve Beyerlein spent time finding the old Mora Grant survey maps and notes and helping to interpret them at the BLM office in Santa Fe. Dr. Mary Anne Anders of the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division provided information on historic publications as well as National Register Nomination information. Laura Holt at the Laboratory of Anthropology Library, and Al Regensberg and Sandra Macias at the State Records and Archives Center were most helpful in finding obscure references and suggesting others. Angela Romero, in the Mora County Assessor's Office, was of great assistance in finding recent ownership information on LA 74220. Benjamin W. Arguello, Ocate postmaster, was most hospitable while the author was doing field work in Ocate and provided vital information on people in the town who would be willing to share their knowledge of local history. The seven people who were interviewed deserve a special thank you: Benjamin Arguello, Sr., Ernestine Arguello, Benjamin W. Arguello, Carlos Fernandez, Annie Fernandez, Max Lopez, and Alex Mares. Without their generous sharing of knowledge this report could not have been written.

RESEARCH GOALS AND METHODS

An ethnohistoric study of LA 74220 and the nearby Ocate region was conducted from January 29 through March 31, 1991, and on August 28, 1991. The study was initiated to determine the ownership history of the land, to investigate various site functions, to establish the kinds of economic activities that had been undertaken here, and to aid in placing the site in a larger sociocultural context. Research methods included site visits, a study of land title records, Moral Land Grant history, historical documents and other archival materials, a review of relevant published sources, and interviews with knowledgeable individuals from the area.

The ethnohistory portion of the project began with a visit to the site in the company of Dr. Sarah Schlanger, project director, on January 29, 1991. In order to determine land ownership history, there followed a limited review of the archival literature on the area and relevant legal materials at the Bureau of Land Management office, Santa Fe; the Mora County Assessor's Office; the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office; the Laboratory of Anthropology library; and the New Mexico State Records and Archives Center. In February and March, 1991, seven Ocate residents were interviewed concerning their knowledge of LA 74220, their understanding of the history of Ocate and surrounding villages, and their recollections of the changes in the local community, its social structure, and economic focus in the twentieth century.

The archaeological testing program at LA 74220, described in Part I above, resulted in the recovery of data that supported a connection between the structures and animal husbandry. Although it is clear that the structures date to the end of the nineteenth century or the first decades of the twentieth century, their exact function remains unknown. Schlanger (pers. comm., 1991) hypothesized that LA 74220 contained the remains of old sheep pens. Peckham (pers. comm., 1991) has suggested that perhaps these were the small structures constructed by cowboys or shepherders to deflect the wind from their bodies as they slept on the ground at night. The goal of the present research is to examine relevant material to try to determine whether they sheltered animals or herders, or if there is any other equally plausible function. Other questions to be addressed include the importance of sheep in the economy of the area, when and why sheep would have been in this mountain area, whose sheep might have been there, and why they are no longer there. What was the importance of these structures from the perspective of the general history of the area?

Additionally, the site is adjacent to one of the old trading trails to Taos (Mares 1981:1). This was an east-west route that extended from Ocate Crossing (one segment of the Santa Fe Trail) up over the mountains to the west, to Taos (Santa Fe National Historic Trail, Map Supplement 1990, sheet 98). What might have been the connection, if any, between LA 74220 and the old trail to Taos?

The results of ethnohistoric research are presented in the remainder of this report. Initially, a general history of the northeast region of New Mexico provides an appropriate context for the following examination of the more specific events and activities of the town of Ocate and the immediate vicinity. Finally, information relevant to LA 74220 is included.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW OF THE OCATE REGION, MORA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

The Indian Presence and Spanish Occupation and Settlement of the Area

American Indians were the earliest known inhabitants of this region. Navajos, Utes, Kiowas, Comanches, and Northern Apaches camped, hunted, and traveled through the area (Twitchell 1917:390-395). Unlike the Pueblos, they neither built nor abandoned permanent structures in northeastern New Mexico.

During the Spanish Colonial period (1540-1821), various Spanish expeditions explored the northeast area. None of them, however, passed through the Ocate-Mora area (Pratt 1986). Later in the Spanish Colonial period and on into the following Mexican period (1821-1846), as the Indian danger declined, Spanish colonists began to settle the area. At first, the Spanish-European culture was largely centered in the Río Grande Valley and some outlying settlements. These communities were largely self-sufficient, out of necessity, since their links to Mexico were thousands of miles away. Trade routes to Mexico did exist and caravans traveled back and forth, but only occasionally and then with much difficulty (Pratt 1986:2). No settlements were attempted in the Mora-Ocate region until the nineteenth century (Twitchell 1917:390) because of the problems with Indian raids.

In the late eighteenth century, during a time when Indian raiding was greatly reduced, the Spanish began migrating into new areas in north-central and eastern New Mexico and established small settlements. After the Comanche Peace of 1786, Spanish settlers from Trampas, Embudo, and Picuris began migrating into the Mora Valley (Pratt 1986:32, 49).

Within a few years of the establishment of the Mora Land Grant in 1835, Spanish-American rural farm villages or *placitas* sprang up wherever good arable land and water could be found in the foothill valleys. Later, settlers occupied the higher mountain valleys and the drier valleys in the lower eastern plains. Within a few years almost every river and tributary was dotted with small Spanish-American settlements (Knowlton 1988:60, n. 71).

By the mid to late 1800s, the economy of the region was based on the intensive farming of small agricultural plots and raising livestock, primarily sheep, which grazed on the common lands of the grant (Knowlton 1988:60). Some of the young men, known as *ciboleros*, hunted buffalo on the Plains each fall; others, known as *comancheros*, developed trade networks with the Comanches, depending at first on surplus products from the villages, later expanding to all manner of goods, including purchasing from the Indians stolen Texas cattle. This latter practice caused the eventual suppression of this form of trade in the late 1870s by Anglo ranchers whose stock was rapidly being depleted by Comanche raids (Pratt 1986:30-31; Knowlton 1988:60). When the buffalo were destroyed, the *ciboleros* also ceased to exist.

Indian Raiding and the Establishment of Forts

Throughout the 1700s the Utes and Comanches attacked Spanish settlements in north-central and northeastern New Mexico. Having been in this region first, the Indian tribes were not anxious

to share their land with these intruders. Use of this area by Jicarillas, Utes, Comanches, and Kiowas made the area unattractive to the Spanish (Knowlton 1988:60; Twitchell 1917:396). After a series of battles between Spanish soldiers and various Indian bands, the Comanches, in 1786, signed a peace treaty with the Spanish. This document was largely honored by both sides until the coming of the Anglo-Americans in 1846. A Spaniard named Pedro Vial traveled through the area north of Ocate in 1793 and again in 1804 and 1805 in order to strengthen relations between the Spanish and the Pawnee and Comanche Indian tribes (Condie 1984:70-72; Loomis and Nasatir 1967:421-423). There are no specific incidents or battles recorded between the Spanish and the Indians in the Ocate-Mora region (Twitchell 1917; Pratt 1986).

When the Americans took control of the region in 1846, the change in the power structure shattered the fragile, peaceful relationship established among the frontier peoples (Pratt 1986:30). Indian raids increased and continued to cause pain and hardship for local settlers. Lt. Colonel E. V. Sumner built Ft. Union in 1850 and established his headquarters there. The purpose of the fort was to provide protection from the Indians for the traders on the Santa Fe Trail as well as for settlers in the area. It also served to curb uprisings by local Hispanic populations against the newly established American presence in the region (Twitchell 1917:404-407).

Sumner chose a location for a fort on the eastern frontier, located near the junction of the Mountain Branch and the Cimarron Cutoff of the Santa Fe Trail, north of the Mora River, on the Mora Land Grant (Twitchell 1917:404; Pratt 1986:103-104; see Fig. 8). In spite of the presence of the fort, the situation worsened in the 1860s because many of the army units stationed there were ordered to move to join the Union armies of the East during the Civil War (Twitchell 1917:408). Indian attacks increased after southern sympathizers informed the tribes that the regular union troops had marched east and that the area was left relatively undefended (Twitchell 1917:418-419). Two newly formed New Mexico regiments, a unit of volunteers and a Colorado regiment, became significant in holding off Confederate Texan troops in New Mexico during this war, but in general they were not available to keep the Indian raiding under control (Pratt 1986:105, 107; Twitchell 1917:406-418).


In September 1862 General James H. Carleton became the new commander of the New Mexico troops and he turned his attention to subduing the Indians who had become a major problem for area settlers. Ft. Union was critical for defending and protecting the northeastern part of New Mexico Territory from the raids of the Kiowas, Comanches, and other Plains Indian tribes (Twitchell 1917:418-419). In 1863 the Indians were raiding in the valleys of the Mora, Canadian, and Red rivers (see Fig. 8). Apaches, Navajos, and others were in almost every valley in Mora and San Miguel counties. The army's orders were to pursue and destroy the Indians, which they did to the best of their ability (Twitchell 1917:420).

At about this same time, troops from Ft. Sumner, located to the south, fought a battle with Navajos coming from the north, who had in their possession 9,889 sheep and a large amount of other property that had been stolen in Mora County and elsewhere. The army had engaged Mescalero Apaches to help them in this battle against the Navajos (Twitchell 1917:420-421).

The Comanches were raiding regularly along the Santa Fe Trail, killing travelers, plundering wagon trains, and driving off cattle. General Carleton ordered more troops to Ft. Union and posted commands at various points along the trail (Twitchell 1917:421).

SANTA FE TRAIL

Compiled by
W. E. Brown



Drawn by
Clyde Arquero

Scale
0 30 60 90 120
1" = 60 miles

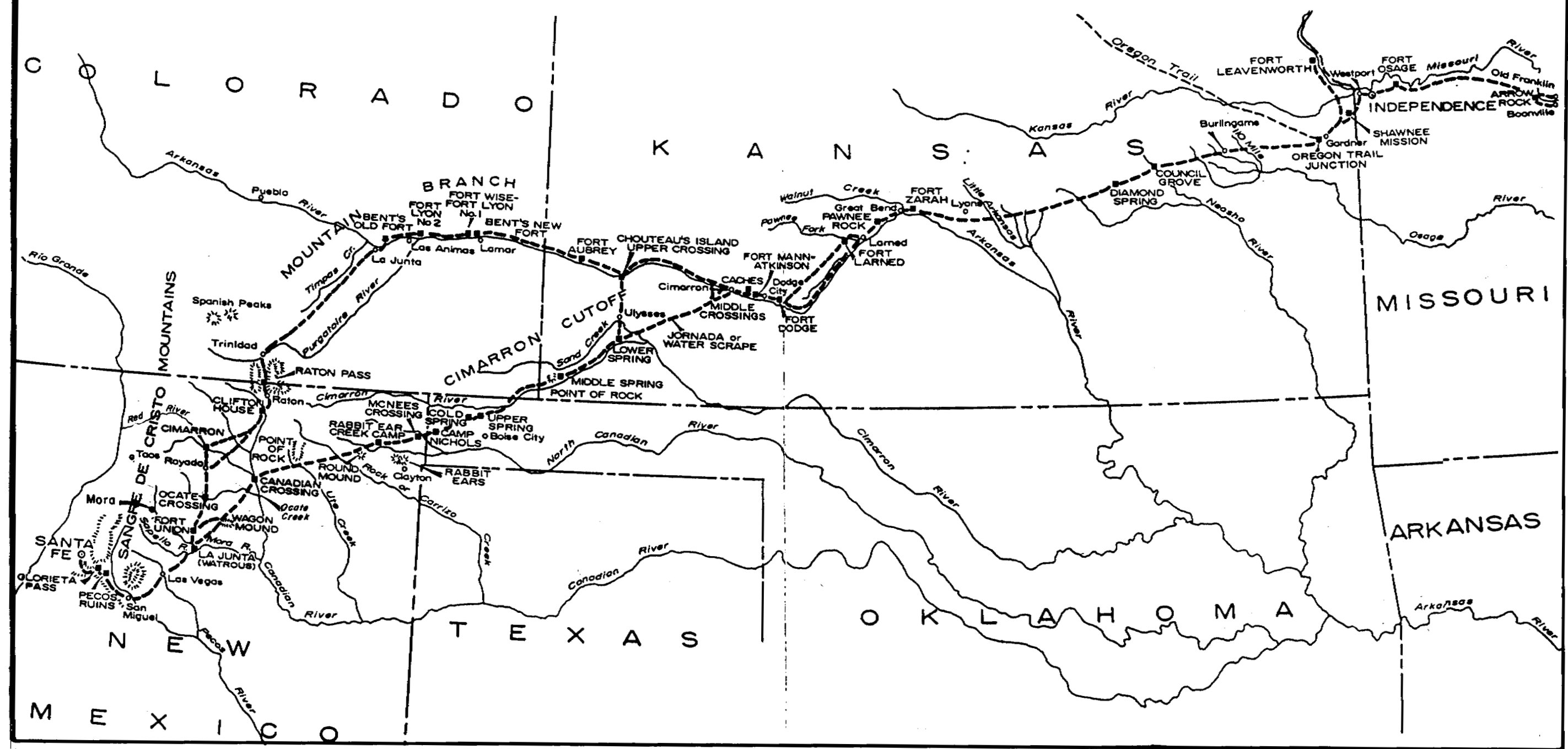


Figure 8. The Santa Fe Trail: the Mountain Branch and the Cimarron Cutoff (adapted from Brown 1990).

It was noted that at times during their raids, the Comanches and Kiowas treated the Spanish-Americans differently than the Anglos. According to General Carleton (Twitchell 1917:422-423, n. 283), the Anglo troubles with the Comanches and Kiowas began because the Indians were not properly treated by the government in the way of distribution of presents and gifts, which had been properly given to the Cheyennes and Arapahos. Therefore, the Comanches and Kiowas began attacking the wagon trains, killing people, and taking what they wanted and needed. These same tribes, however, allowed any "Mexicans" in the wagon trains to return on horse or mule to their settlements, unharmed. The "Mexicans" had developed good trading relations with these tribes and when the Kiowas and Comanches released them from raids, the relations between the two groups remained strong. Obviously, these circumstances angered the Anglo-Americans, though there was not much they could do about it (Twitchell 1917:422-424). No available evidence indicates that any of the other Indian tribes treated the Spanish-Americans differently.

The American Period: The Santa Fe Trail, the Ocate Trail, and Early Reactions of Spanish-Americans to the Anglo-American Presence

In 1821 the Santa Fe Trail was "founded" by William Becknell, and became the major route into New Mexico from Missouri and Kansas (Brown 1990:7-9). Numerous wagon trains, loaded with goods from the East, made the difficult journey that ended in Santa Fe. The two major routes were called the Mountain Branch (established first) and the Cimarron Branch or Cutoff (established a few years later) (Pratt 1986:63-69). The Mountain Branch followed the Arkansas River west through Kansas, turned southwest at Bent's Fort in Colorado, and entered New Mexico at Raton. It then passed through Rayado, Ocate Crossing, Ft. Union, Watrous, and finally ended in Santa Fe (Chittenden 1954:530-532; Pratt 1986:70-73; National Park Service Map of Historic Route, Santa Fe National Historic Trail, 1990, in Brown 1990; Fig. 8). On this route a caravan was less likely to be attacked by Indians than on the other route. The more dangerous Cimarron Cutoff turned southwest in western Kansas, entered New Mexico northeast of Clayton, and headed down to Wagon Mound, Watrous, and ended in Santa Fe. It was slightly shorter than the Mountain route, but attack by Indians was more likely and it included a long stretch with no available water.

A secondary trail (the Ocate Trail) went west from Ocate Crossing on Ocate Creek and is now superseded by NM 120. This trail proceeded up through Manueles Canyon to Black Lake and on to Taos (Mares 1981:1; Goodman 1991, field notes; Fig. 9). In 1825 Congress appropriated \$10,000 so that J. C. Brown, surveyor, could "mark the line of a road from the Missouri frontier to New Mexico" (Chittenden 1954:533). In addition to mapping the main Santa Fe trails, he was interested in a route that went to Taos, and his 1825 map shows a trail from Ocate Crossing heading northwest through the town of Ocate into Manueles Canyon to Black Lake (National Park Service Map Supplement, Santa Fe National Historic Trail 1990:98; see Fig. 9). According to Alex Mares, an Ocate elder, the town of Ocate was the exchange point for the merchandise and goods that the wagons carried. Some goods would be sent on the Ocate Trail through Manueles Canyon to Taos, and the rest would remain on the wagons going to Santa Fe by way of the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail. From Ocate, the route to Santa Fe continued on between Cerro Pelon and El Corral de los Apaches and then turned south to Ft. Union and Las Vegas (Mares 1981:1; see Fig. 10). As a boy, Alex listened over and over again to the tales of the old timers who knew the routes and told him about them. Josiah Gregg also

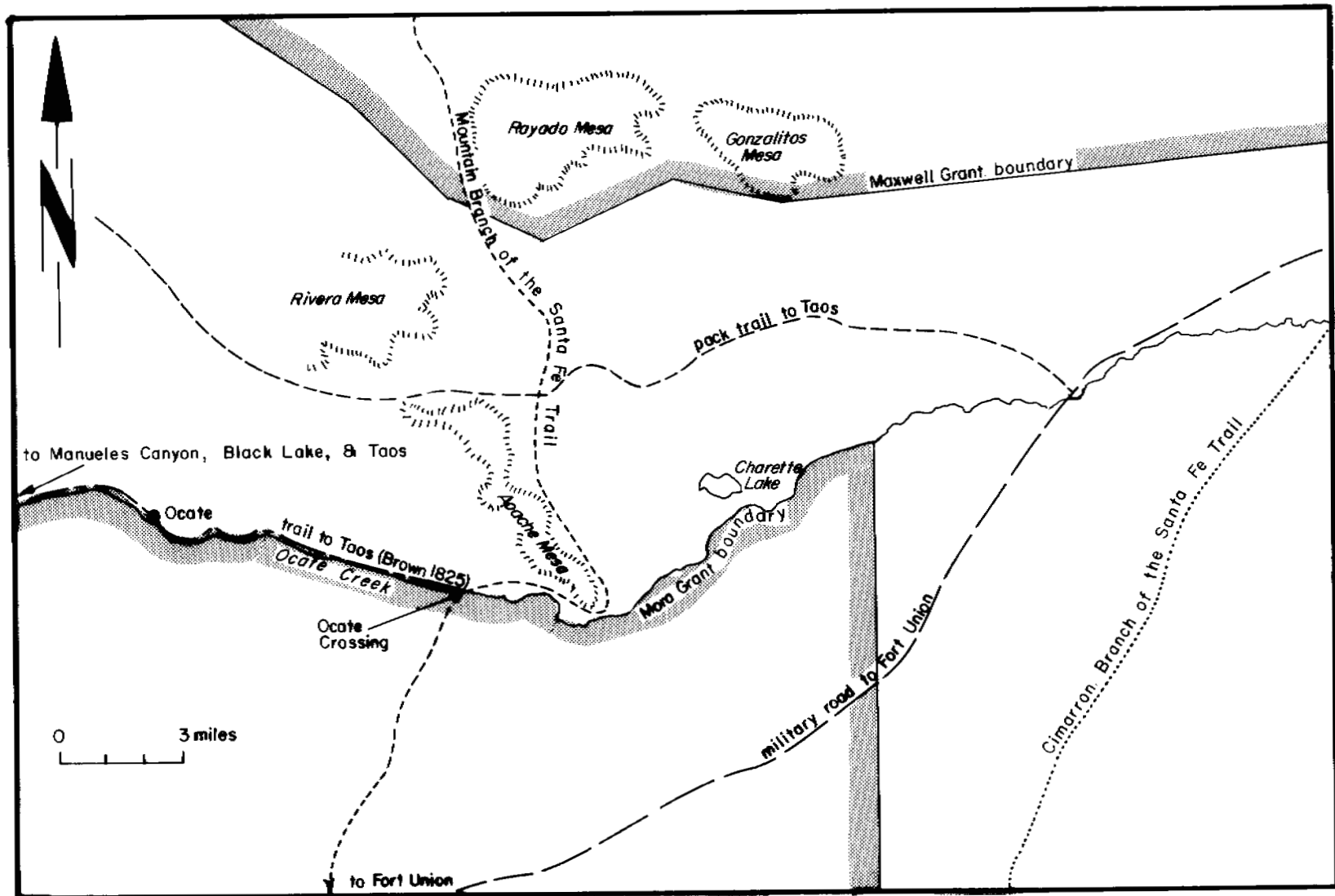


Figure 9. Merchant and military trails in the Ocate area, circa 1825-1875 (adapted from the 1990 National Park Service Santa Fe Trail National Historical Trail Map and Franzwa 1989).

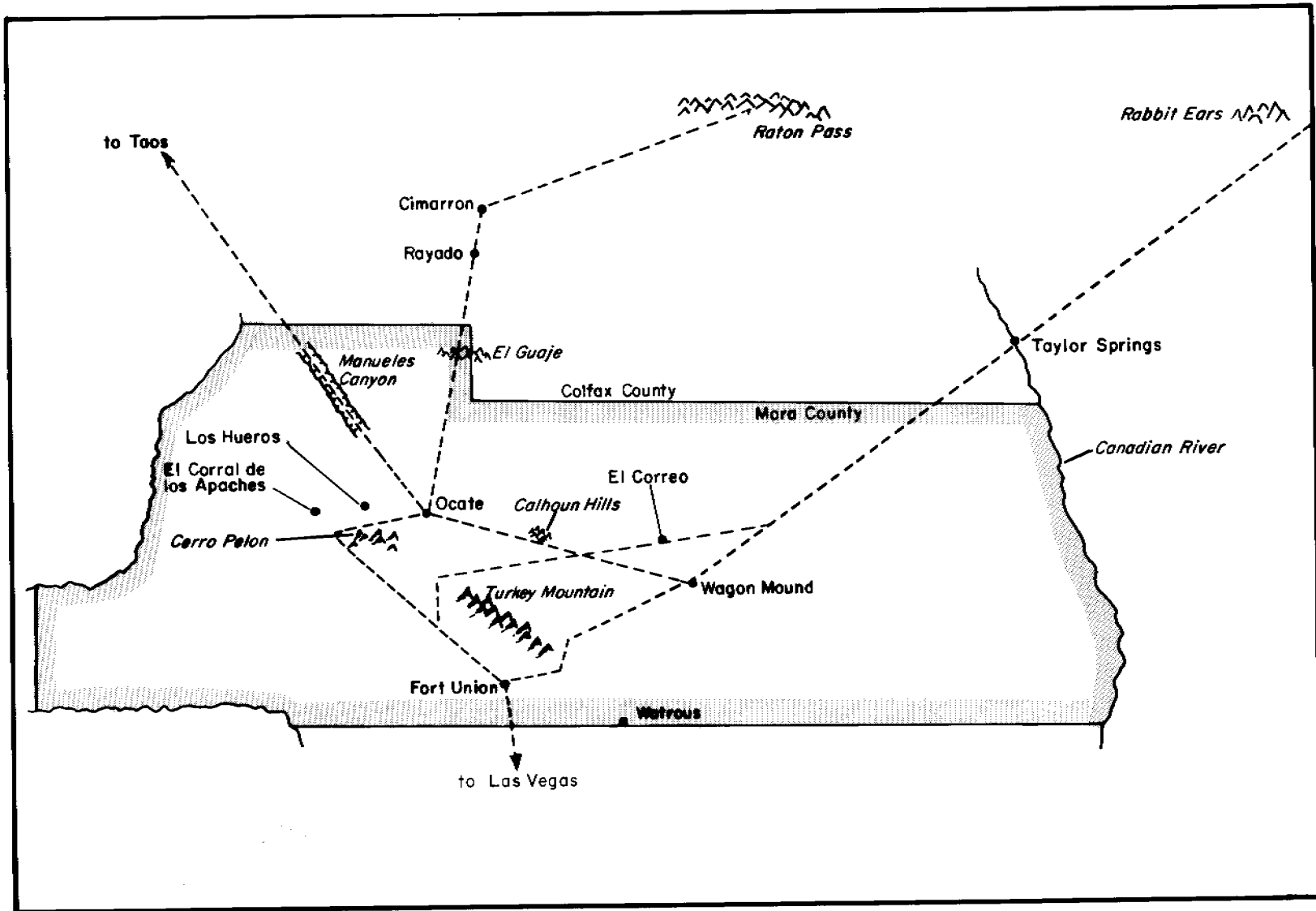


Figure 10. Alex Mares's map of the Ocate vicinity, circa 1850 (adapted from Mares 1981:1). Mr. Mares remembered locations of several towns and places that no longer exist.

cited a direct but rugged route across the mountains from the Río Colorado (Canadian River) to Taos (1954:74). It is not clear whether he was referring to the Ocate Trail. How much the trail from Ocate to Taos was actually used remains unknown.

Throughout the greater part of the 1800s, when the Ocate Crossing was in use, it was located approximately 5 to 6 miles east of the village of Ocate. Presently situated on Glave Blattman's Ranch, it is in the eastern part of the area known as Los Naranjos (Fig. 11). Physical evidence of the crossing area is still present (Brown 1990:201-202). (The author tried unsuccessfully to contact Mr. Blattman a number of times, and thus the exact location of Ocate Crossing could not be recorded.) None of the earlier Spanish trails passed through the Ocate area; therefore, it is highly unlikely that Ocate Crossing was used as a part of any of them. The crossing was used, however, until the Santa Fe Trail closed after the completion of the railroad in 1879.

Since Ocate Crossing was one of the important points on the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail, several early travelers through the area have briefly described it in their journals or other writings. In his journal (U.S. Congress 1848:37; Brown 1990:200), Lt. Abert noted that he and his party were forced to go 2 miles upstream, skirting the end of a high-walled mesa (now called Apache Hill), in order to reach a passable crossing place on the Ocate River.

In 1846, American troops, led by General Stephen W. Kearney, entered New Mexico from the north along the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail. His Army of the West camped at Ocate Crossing. At one point, Kearney's advance guard came in contact with several "Mexicans" from Mora who were said to be spies and he sent them back to Mora with a message requesting a meeting with the alcalde (Twitchell 1917:403).

A Missouri volunteer described the Army of the West's camp on the Ocate River (Brown 1990:201-202). It was located on a limpid stream of fresh water with the nearest timber 2½ miles away. He described the scramble of setting up camp, gathering fire wood, preparing a meal, and finally settling down to sleep. Lt. Emory, a member of the group, made a map of the area and designated the places where the Army of the West camped. They were camped at Ocate Crossing on August 11, 1846 (Brown 1990:203).

Until the American takeover of New Mexico Territory in 1846, life proceeded normally for the people who were living on the Mora Land Grant (Fig. 9). They survived by growing crops, raising sheep, developing small businesses, trading with the Indians, or working as buffalo hunters.

With the advent of the Americans, the picture changed. According to the English traveler, George Ruxton, who was in New Mexico shortly after the American occupation, there was a great deal of hostility toward the Americans, who acted in a superior, condescending, and generally unpleasant manner toward the Spanish-Americans in the area (Hafen 1950:188). As a result, the Taos Revolt began in 1847 and rapidly spread throughout northern New Mexico. Seven American Santa Fe traders were killed in Mora. The American Army had to launch several attacks before finally subduing a revolt in Mora (Knowlton 1988:61; Twitchell 1963:124-138; Goodrich 1972). No similar incidents are documented in Ocate.

As a result of these difficulties, Ft. Union became an even more important American military post. The troops stationed there kept the peace in northern New Mexico, provided moderate protec

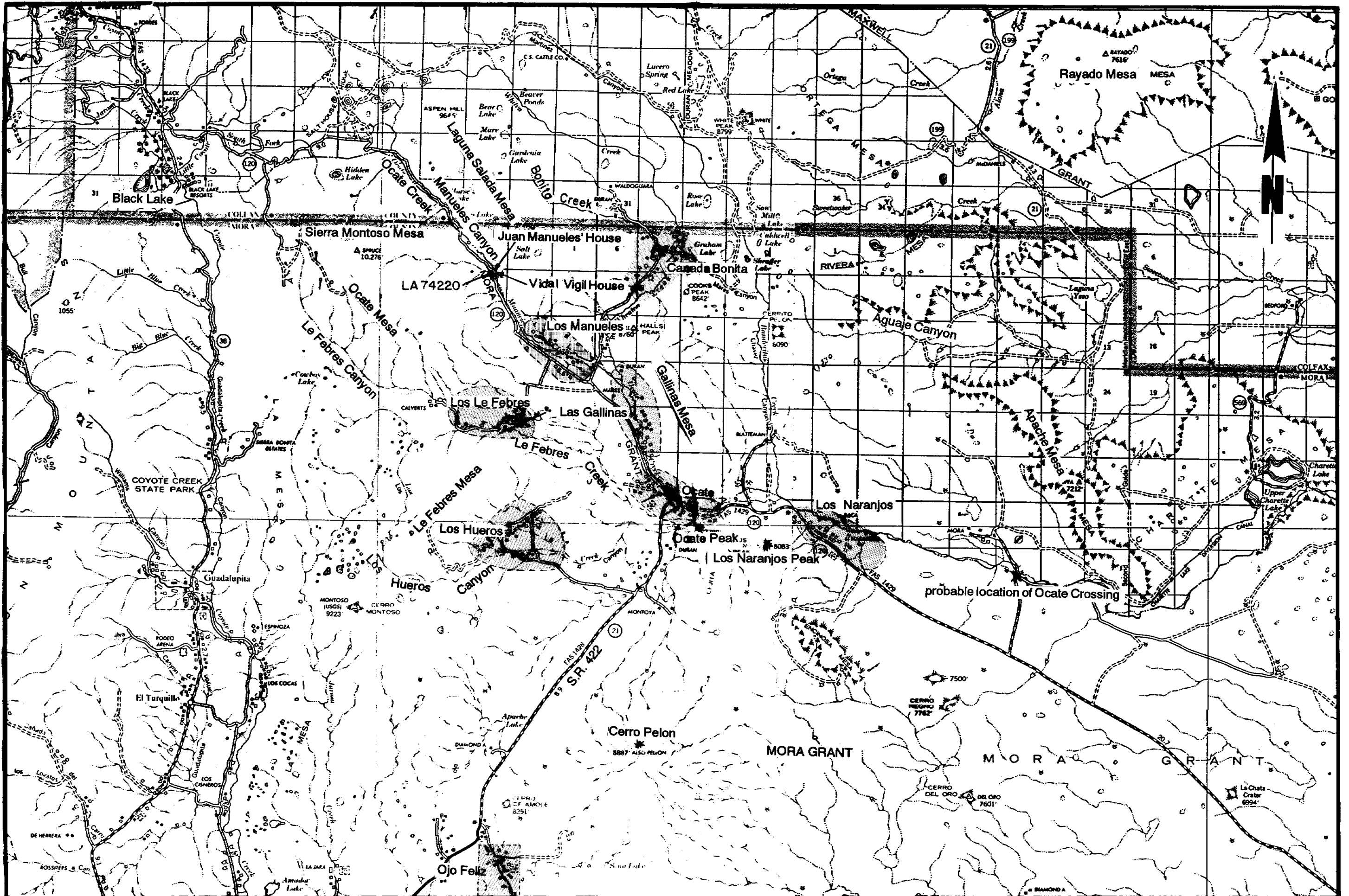


Figure 11. Ocate and surrounding villages and features circa early to mid-1900s.

tion against Indian raids, and became an ever-ready market for hay, grain, fruit, vegetables, and livestock produced by the local Spanish-American population (Knowlton 1988:61). Some of these local people also found employment on the post. With the passage of time, more outsiders, Anglo-Americans and European immigrants, either purchased land from Spanish-American residents or squatted on Mora Grant land near the fort. They worked at a variety of occupations and mostly married local Spanish-American women (Knowlton 1988:61).

A Brief History of the Mora Land Grant

As stated earlier, some time after the Comanche Peace of 1786, Spanish settlers from the areas of Trampas, Embudo, and Picuris began moving into the Mora Valley (Pratt 1986:32, 49). In 1835, after having lived on and improved the land for a number of years, these settlers petitioned and were awarded a land grant. Manuel Antonio Sanchez, constitutional justice of the jurisdiction of San Jose de las Trampas, proceeded to a place called Lo de Mora to distribute public land to the 76 citizens already established in two adjacent valleys: Valle de Santa Gertrudes--the lower one, and Valle de San Antonio--the upper one. One town site was marked out in each valley and the land suitable for cultivation was distributed along with common lands and a common road (Twitchell 1914:173). This land came to be known as the Mora Land Grant, which was established in 1835. No specific boundary descriptions or maps exist to clearly delineate either of these valleys or the places where the towns were established. Lo de Mora is considered to be approximately where the town of Mora is today and the Valle de Santa Gertrudes is thought to be the Mora Valley. It is unclear exactly where the Valle de San Antonio was located. It is possible that it encompassed the area now known as the Ocate Valley. Also, it is not known precisely when settlers moved into these areas, only that they were present after 1786 and before 1835. The towns were not recognized as official towns until the land grant was awarded.

The northern boundary of the Mora Grant is recorded as the Ocate River (Twitchell 1914:174). Therefore, the settlement of Ocate, south of this boundary, was part of the Mora Grant. LA 74220, also located south of the Ocate River, was included in the Mora Grant (see Fig. 11). Ocate residents interviewed stated that both the town and the site were originally on the Mora Grant (Goodman 1991, field notes). Whether LA 74220 was privately held by one of the original settler families or part of the grant common lands is unknown. No titles were issued and no descriptions of individual landholdings exist.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which was signed by the U.S. when it acquired this land from Mexico in 1848, offered protection of the rights and property of the Spanish-Americans living in New Mexico who, from 1821 until 1848, had been Mexican citizens. The U.S. did little to honor these provisions until 1854 when Congress created the position of Surveyor General of New Mexico to investigate the validity of Spanish and Mexican land claims and make recommendations to Congress (Knowlton 1988:62).

The Mora Land Grant was affected by the Surveyor General's actions. As requested by the Surveyor General of New Mexico, Jose Maria Valdez and Vicente Romero, on June 20, 1851, submitted a petition, "On behalf of themselves and other inhabitants, Settlers of Mora" (Knowlton 1988:62). With the aid of their attorneys, Ashurst and Jackson, the two men sought confirmation of the Mora community land grant for themselves and for the other settlers on this grant. Eight years

later, on July 1, 1859, the Surveyor General again determined that a valid community land grant had been made by the Mexican government to the settlers on the Mora Grant. He recommended that Congress confirm the grant to its inhabitants, and such action was taken on June 21, 1860. The boundaries of the grant were carefully named, but they subsequently had to be surveyed, marked on the ground, and the acreage of the grant had to be correctly determined before a patent could be issued (Knowlton 1988:62).

Problems developed in completing an accurate survey in the extremely inaccessible western part of the grant, due to the ruggedness of the high mountains and conflicting reports on the springs, which marked a portion of the grant on the south. Thus the first survey, done by Thomas Means and his crew in 1861, was contested by a new Surveyor General, who also thought Means had made the grant too large. Means resurveyed in 1863 and the boundaries were finally accepted in that year, though the survey was not approved (Knowlton 1988:62). On July 1, 1871, T. Rush Spencer, a different Surveyor General of New Mexico, approved the Means survey.

A group of unscrupulous Anglo-American lawyers, politicians, merchants, and land speculators, however, combined their talents to wrest the Mora Land Grant from its rightful owners. Stephen B. Elkins and Thomas B. Catron, two life-long friends from Missouri, moved to New Mexico, were first elected to the Territorial legislature and then each was appointed U.S. District Attorney during the 1860s. In 1873, Elkins moved to Washington, D.C., where he became a powerful figure in the Republican Party. In this effective political position he could exert pressure on government agencies such as the General Land Office and the Surveyor General of New Mexico (Knowlton 1988:64).

Elkins and Catron were highly important players in the organization and management of the Santa Fe Ring, an informal organization that controlled much of the economic and political life in New Mexico during the Territorial period. It was composed essentially of a group of lawyers, politicians, and businessmen who united to run the territory and also to make money. They regarded land as their first medium of currency (Lamar 1966:136-170). This group was extremely well connected with the Eastern establishment and the Republican Party. With these connections they were able to entice Eastern U.S. and European investors to purchase portions of Spanish and Mexican land grants in New Mexico. One of the first grants to attract Catron and Elkins's attention was the Mora Land Grant (Lamar 1966:136-170; Knowlton 1988:64-65; Westphall 1973:40-41).

After discovering that the Mora grant contained impressive natural resources, Elkins and Catron quietly bought up as many rights in the grant common lands as they could. By 1870 they had acquired 16 such rights, registered in Elkins's name in the Mora County Courthouse (Knowlton 1988:65). These two then formed an investment pool that also included Colonel Samuel S. Smoot, a land speculator, Captain E. N. Darling, a government surveyor, and T. Rush Spencer, the current Surveyor General of New Mexico. Each member received one-fifth interest in all lands purchased (Westphall 1973:40-41, 1983:218-219).

In 1871, T. Rush Spencer, Surveyor General of New Mexico, approved the Means survey of the Mora Land Grant. He sent the survey and a petition for the patent (in the names of Elkins and Catron) to the commissioner of the General Land Office. More complications ensued. The patent was not issued immediately because the western boundary of the grant had only been estimated by Means. Eventually, the General Land Office accepted Means's survey and even though Elkins and

Catron owned only a small portion of the land rights on the grant, the commissioner of the General Land Office, Willis Drummond, bowed to the political pressures exerted by Elkins and his friends, and on June 20, 1876, issued the patent to them in spite of strong protests by the actual inhabitants of the grant (Knowlton 1988:65; Westphall 1983:157-158). These two and the rest of their investment group then petitioned the court, in 1877, to partition the common lands of the grant. The court ordered the common lands sold and the proceeds distributed to the claimants. The Spanish-American and Anglo-American residents on the grant were outraged and sent a petition to the General Land Office denouncing the issuance of the patent to Catron and Elkins (Knowlton 1988:65-66). This petition was ignored.

For a variety of reasons, the five members of the investment pool eventually broke apart. Some died; others sold their shares (Knowlton 1988:67). By the late 1880s the grant common lands were primarily owned by Catron, Benjamin F. Butler, a Massachusetts politician, and Adelbart Ames, a Massachusetts businessman. Butler died in 1893, gaining little from his Mora Land Grant holdings. The Butler heirs, Ames, and Catron found it difficult to cooperate on the business affairs of the grant. Finally, the common lands of the grant, legally held by the group, were divided. Catron received 250,000 acres north of the 36th parallel; Ames and the Butlers received 350,000 acres south of the 36th parallel (Knowlton 1988:67).

It is likely that Catron owned the land that includes LA 74220 since it is north of the 36th parallel. In 1909, Thomas B. Catron deeded his share of the Mora Grant to his son, Charles C. Catron, who spent many unprofitable years trying to force the local inhabitants to recognize his title (Knowlton 1988:67).

Because the western boundary of this grant had not been firmly established, a series of surveys were undertaken, including those by Baylor and Holland in 1862, Rice in 1896, Walker in 1902, Kirkpatrick in 1906, Strover in 1906, and Compton in 1911. Eventually, the Supreme Court, in 1923, decided that the boundary line established by the Means' survey in 1861, would be the official boundary (Knowlton 1988:65-69). It took 52 years to firmly establish the legal boundaries of the grant.

The local Spanish-American and Anglo-American residents on the grant lands ignored the claims of the Catrons, Butlers, and Ameses, and continued to use their common lands as they always had (for the grazing of livestock). They refused to pay royalties to the Catrons and refused to move off of their land (Knowlton 1988:69).

The Elkins-Catron suit to partition the common lands of the grant was initially filed in 1876, but no action was taken regarding the suit at that time. Charles Catron was never able to establish clear title to the land, and finally on February 13, 1913, the Catron interests were sold at the Mora County Courthouse door for failure to pay property taxes in Mora County. Frank Roy, a resident of Las Vegas, bought the land (Knowlton 1988:69). In 1915, after the Catron interests had collapsed, the partition suit of 1876 was suddenly resurrected in the local district court. This was done secretly and the people on the grant were not informed of this legal action. The subsequent sale of the land took place on February 22, 1916, at the Mora County Courthouse door, and it has been hypothesized that there might have been a special arrangement between the court and speculative Anglo-American land interests. The final result was that the common lands in the Butler section of the grant were sold to Leonard Wheeler for \$6,000, and the former Catron interests were bought by the State Investment Company, a newly formed Las Vegas, New Mexico company, some of whose founding members

were George A. Flemming, William Shillinglaw, and Reeve Eagle, all of Las Vegas (Knowlton 1988:69-72).

Thus, in 1916 the descendants of the original grant members did indeed lose their claim to the common lands, although the Anglo-American land speculators who finally acquired it never seem to have gained financially from owning it (Knowlton 1988:70). Its loss was severely felt by the local population, including the people of Ocate and Mora. It wreaked havoc on the village economic system, which was structured on semisubsistence agriculture, grazing large herds of sheep or cattle on the common lands, cutting timber, and some migratory labor (Knowlton 1988:70).

The economic system was forced to change. More men moved away to other western states to become migrant farm laborers or sheepherders. Some worked in nearby mines, on the railroads, or migrated to western cities in search of jobs. During World War II some people were trained as defense plant workers and migrated in order to work in these plants. The result has been a great population loss in Ocate specifically and Mora County in general, and extreme poverty for many of the remaining families (Knowlton 1988:70-71).

Sheep Raising in Northeastern New Mexico

Because Ocate was an important sheep-raising area for part of its history, it is helpful to establish a picture of the sheep culture of Northeastern New Mexico. Sheep were first brought into New Mexico by Coronado in 1540. More arrived in 1598 with Juan de Oñate, who founded the first Spanish settlement of San Gabriel on the site of Yunge Owinge Pueblo, near present-day San Juan Pueblo (Ellis 1989). The climate and type of vegetation proved ideal for sheep, and they thrived. Large markets developed in Mexico to feed the miners in Durango, Viscaya, Chihuahua, Guaymas, and San Juan, and sheep raising became a large-scale activity in some parts of New Mexico. (Northeastern New Mexico, still sparsely settled and subject to numerous Indian raids, was not yet a major sheep raising area.) Between 1820 and 1830 Josiah Gregg remarked that about 200,000 head were annually driven to the southern markets and in earlier days, it was said that 500,000 were taken there annually (Gregg 1954:99; Pratt 1986:127). Obviously this trade was quite profitable.

The sheep trade continued until 1846, when the Mexican War brought it to a halt. Other markets, however, soon developed--the gold fields of California in 1849, and later the gold fields of Colorado, silver fields of Nevada, and Mormon settlements in Utah (Pratt 1986:128).

For a period of time, Indian raids limited the profitability of the sheep business in northeastern New Mexico. Eventually, with the Indians subdued following their defeat in the Red River War of 1874, new economic ventures were considered safe. Ft. Union was no longer needed and therefore was abandoned in 1891. The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad came into the region in 1879. Once the Indian threat was removed, and the railroad was available to move livestock to market, much of Mora County became an important stock-raising region, with large herds of sheep and later, cattle. It is possible that LA 74220 was utilized during this time, but there is no definite information to corroborate this. (Its use is implied in statements by Ocate elders that the area surrounding and including LA 74220 was excellent for sheep pasture land in the days before they were born, 70 to 85 years ago). In some areas, large agricultural endeavors were also undertaken depending on the specific qualities of the land (Twitchell 1917:425-426; Pratt 1986:112-

113). The economic and political circumstances of the time often dictated whether an operation dealt solely or mainly with sheep or whether it diversified and expanded into cattle raising (Pratt 1986: 138, 140-141).

Until the advent of the railroad in 1879, Las Vegas was the main wool processing center for eastern New Mexico. The three main firms were Ifeld and Ifeld, Stern and Nahm, and Rosenwald. No Ocate residents recalled any of their families trading at these establishments. After the railroad was completed, other mercantile establishments developed in Wagon Mound, Clayton, and Tucumcari. The Bond operation in Wagon Mound was one of the principal ones in the area (Pratt 1986:131). Ocate residents could not remember trading with them either. Rather, they stated that they traded at MacArthur's in Wagon Mound. Archibald MacArthur and Manuel Paltenghe owned and ran this store from 1903 until MacArthur died in 1912. It had previously belonged to the Bonds (Pratt 1986:131), so it is possible that earlier generations in Ocate had indeed traded at the same establishment and that this was unknown by the present Ocate elders.

Spanish-American sheep-raising activities were often organized under the *partido* system, an important socioeconomic arrangement that existed throughout the region. According to this system, a wealthy Spanish-American sheep owner (*rico*) with perhaps 250,000 head of sheep, would give a flock numbering anywhere from one hundred to several thousand (called a *partida*) to a shepherd (*partidario*) who worked for him. The *partidario* was required, under the terms of the agreement, to return a certain percentage (usually 10-20 percent) of the lambs and the wool each year for five years. At the end of this time he was to return the original number of sheep; he kept the rest, from which he could build his own sheep enterprise. Sometimes this worked and a poor man had a chance to develop his own holdings. In other cases, due to Indian raids, illness, or predators, the *partidario* did not fare so well (Pratt 1986:128-129). In the late 1800s and early 1900s there were a number of large Spanish-American sheep operations in northeastern New Mexico with very wealthy owners (Pratt 1986:135-137). Ocate residents stated that some Spanish-Americans in the Ocate region had become wealthy through their large sheep ventures.

Generally, there was a loose organizational structure connected with sheep raising. An average flock numbered around 2,000 sheep, which were cared for by a *pastore*, a Spanish-American shepherd, and his sheep dog. The *pastore* stayed with the sheep year-round and relied heavily on the help of the sheep dog, which was well trained to watch, herd, and protect the flock.

If the sheep operation was large enough, there might be a *vaquero* to watch over several *pastores*. He might, in turn, be supervised by a *caporal*, who made sure that supplies were getting to all the *pastores*. The *caporal* was under the supervision of the *majordomo*, the foreman who directed the complete sheep operation--acquiring and distributing supplies, locating good pasture lands and water, lambing, shearing, and other related tasks. Smaller operations might simply include a *majordomo* who supervised the *pastores* (Pratt 1986:132). The yearly cycle of sheep activities included spring lambing, castration, and tail cutting in the early summer, and shearing and dipping from mid-summer to early fall (Pratt 1986:133-135).

The churro was the type of sheep first raised in New Mexico. It was well adapted to the local environment and survived under difficult conditions. The quality of its wool was inferior, but its meat was delicious (Pratt 1986:129; Carlson 1969:30).

In the 15 to 20 years following the Civil War in the U.S., a large market for wool developed. Native New Mexicans were not anxious to change their sheep-raising methods; however, the Anglos were ready to move into the void and did so. They experimented with new breeds of sheep and adopted new shearing methods. In 1859, Merino rams were brought in and bred with the churros to produce a better quality of wool while still retaining the good-tasting meat. Wool production jumped from 32,000 pounds in New Mexico in 1850 to 4,000,000 pounds in 1880 (Pratt 1986:129-131). Until 1854, sheep had been sheared with knives. In this year John L. Taylor brought sheep shears with him from Ohio, and caused a major leap forward in the ease of obtaining wool (Pratt 1986:129).

Wool prices rose and fell numerous times during the 1800s. A tariff put on foreign wool at the time of the War of 1812 helped sheep raisers. Immediately after the Civil War, however, wool products belonging to the army were dumped on the market, which caused wool prices to fall for a few years. They rose again after 1870 but fell during the panic of 1873. During the 1880s, wool prices were generally good, but the depression of 1893 coupled with the removal of the wool tariff in 1894, brought prices down dramatically. The tariff was restored in 1897 with the help of the Dingley Tariff Act, but wool prices never quite returned to their former strength (Pratt 1986:141).

In 1897, a sheep-dipping law, requiring sheep to be dipped at least once a year, forced many small sheep raisers out of business. They could not afford the heavy capital investment of the dipping facilities that were required. By that year sheep issues had become important enough that a government oversight bureau was established, the Sheep Sanitary Board (Pratt 1986:131).

As time passed, the grant lands were broken up, drought and depression hit the area, sheep raising became less profitable, and cattle ranchers began to move into former shepherding range land. Ranchers came to realize that cattle offered bigger and quicker profits and turned their efforts in that direction. The sheep ranges were being rapidly depleted and were supporting fewer sheep. When New Mexico became a state in 1912, further restrictions were put on range lands. State and institutional land were allocated and rents became too high for most operators. Land grants were fenced, forest lands were put under government management, and homesteaders moved into some areas. The reduction in public domain land brought increased use of the *partido* system (Maxwell 1981:13-14). By this means, men could work for others who had sheep and access to pastures and perhaps even enter into the system themselves.

Over time, grazing land became increasingly monopolized by merchants who had the money to purchase large tracts and who also acquired land through default from customers who could not pay their bills. Most of these merchants controlled key tracts of land that had water or were rights-of-way to larger tracts of public domain land (Weigle 1975:215). Many local residents in the region still would have liked to become *partidario*, but the land could hold no more. By the 1930s, a number of men from northern New Mexico had left their villages to seek work in the Colorado sugar beet fields or on commercial ranches in Montana, Utah, or Wyoming (Levine 1980:55). Changes in the economic balance, new laws, competition with modern techniques, and a cash economy made it impossible for farming and shepherding to continue to be a dependable subsistence strategy in northern New Mexico (Maxwell 1981:14).

Cattle Raising in Northeastern New Mexico

As the profitability of sheep decreased, cattle raising increased in northeast New Mexico. Originally Coronado and his Spanish expedition brought the first cattle into the region in 1540, later expeditions brought more. Spanish cattle-raising traditions were adopted throughout the region.

Most of the cattle-raising activity began in northeastern New Mexico after 1870, when the Civil War was over and the danger from Indian attacks had largely passed. Anglo-American acquisition of the land was accomplished in two different ways: open-range public domain land was often used illegally, and Spanish and Mexican land grants were often purchased by various questionable means (Pratt 1986:151). Spanish-American descendants in the region did not own the large cattle operations (Pratt 1986:151-159).

Aside from raising large herds of cattle, a number of the Anglo operations in northeast New Mexico created irrigation systems and raised alfalfa as feed for the livestock (Pratt 1986:148, 153, 157). Rayado, north of Ocate, which had been a stage stop on the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail during the 1800s, had thousands of cattle and sheep pastured nearby. By 1860, irrigated land in the area was producing 150 acres of alfalfa and hay annually (Murphy 1972:132-133; Pratt 1986:148).

Large Anglo-American cattle corporations began to be formed in the 1880s, some through the investment of foreign capital (Pratt 1986:153). These enterprises developed because of the tremendous profits to be made and the availability of the railroad (Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe) in 1879, which allowed easy access to processing plants in Chicago and Kansas City and to urban markets in the East (Pratt 1986:153).

Barbed wire, invented in the 1870s by J. F. Glidden, was first used in New Mexico in 1880 and gradually became an inexpensive means of fencing the range--thus changing the way cattle were raised. Cattle operations, which had formerly been "open-range" operations, converted to fenced "range-pasture" operations, thus allowing cattle to be selectively bred. Fences put an end to long cattle drives; the railroads replaced them, and cattle could be fatter and heavier when they arrived at market. The introduction of lightweight metal windmills meant that cattle could be raised in areas removed from natural streams or springs, thus increasing the productivity of the entire operation (Pratt 1986:155-156).

The success of cattle operations rose and fell with the economic and environmental changes of the times. For example, the Chicago market price for beef in 1882 was as high as \$9.35 per hundred-weight, but had dropped to \$1.00 by 1887. The winter of 1885-1886 was one of the most severe on record, the summer of 1886 saw a severe drought, and 1887 brought another severe winter; 1891-1894 saw another period of drought. Cattle operations experienced large losses at these times. A major economic depression in 1893 also reduced cattle prices. In total, the picture declined over time and many of the large cattle operations sold out or reorganized and reduced the size of their operations (Pratt 1986:156-161).

Some cattle were raised in the Ocate area in the past, but the numbers were small. No large cattle operations appeared in the region until about thirty to forty years ago. Sheep operations remained primary until this time. Today, a number of large cattle ranches in the area are owned by

Anglos and have replaced the sheep operations. Ocate residents stated that presently cattle are moved through Manueles Canyon. This was not the situation in the past; sheep were pastured in Manueles Canyon previously. There is no evidence that cattle were pastured on LA 74220 in the past.

OVERVIEW OF THE OCATE REGION*

According to Ocate elders, the Tewa Indians lived in this valley before the Spanish arrived. The word Ocate is said to be a Tewa word meaning, "port of the air," or "valley of the wind." The wind blows almost continually through this valley, and is a powerful force much of the year. It is stronger in the spring, somewhat weaker in the fall. Wind remains a climatic constant in this area (Goodman 1991, field notes).

In the early twentieth century, people living in the Ocate region survived largely by farming and raising sheep. Farmers raised a multitude of crops, including wheat, Indian corn, American corn, oats, peas, beans, potatoes, pumpkins, squash, and a variety of fruits: apples, cherries, peaches, plums, and pears.

There were a number of small Spanish-American villages surrounding Ocate, most of which were sheep-raising and farming communities. Most had a school and a Catholic church; some no longer exist. Each was built in a sheltered area and had adequate sources of water nearby.

Los Hueros village (see Fig. 11) is located approximately 4 to 5 miles west and south of Ocate at the mouth of Los Hueros Canyon. This small village had a school and the Church of San Juan, which was only used once a year on San Juan's Day, June 24. The rest of the year, the people came to Ocate on Sundays to pray at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. An Ocate elder, Benjamin Arguello, Sr., stated that he attended the Los Hueros school as a young boy, about 70 years ago.

The village of Los Le Febres (see Fig. 11) is approximately 2½ miles north of Los Hueros, at the mouth of Le Febres Canyon. It is approximately 4 miles west and slightly south of Ocate. A Frenchman by the name of Le Febre was the first settler in that area (Fig. 12). This small village also had a church and a school at one time. The church is still standing.

Los Manueles was a village located 3 to 4 miles north and west of Ocate, at the base of Manueles Canyon (see Fig. 11). A school was located here, but not a church. People attended church at Los Le Febres.

Cañada Bonita was a small village located approximately 5 miles north of Ocate, at the junction of Bonita Creek and Wheaton Creek (Fig. 11). Both a church and a school were located there. Mass was still celebrated in this church in the early 1960s. The church has since been torn down.

The village of Las Gallinas (Fig. 11) was located approximately 2 miles north and west of Ocate, at the base of the west-central portion of Gallinas Mesa. It had a school in the past, but not a church. Carlos Fernandez, an Ocate elder, stated that he attended the Gallinas school about 60 years ago.

*This information was compiled from a series of interviews conducted by the author between January and August 1991, with seven Ocate residents (five of whom are elders).



Figure 12. Ruin of Juan Le Febre's house in the village of Le Febre, northwest of Ocate. (Photo by Linda J. Goodman, August 1991)



Figure 13. The former Weil Store, built in 1906, located on the southwest corner of the intersection of NM 120 and 422, Ocate, New Mexico. This store was purchased and run by the Strong family after WW II. In 1960, Donaciano Mondragon bought and operated it. It has been closed since 1974. (Photo by Linda J. Goodman, August 1991)

Laguna Colorado (Red Lake) is a lake located approximately 10 miles north of Ocate (Fig. 11). It also included a hamlet, called by the same name, in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Potatoes grew well in the area as did hay, which people went there to cut. It is no longer a community.

Los Naranjos was a village located approximately 4 miles east of Ocate, at the eastern edge of Los Naranjos Peak (Fig. 11). The village had a school and also a church. Presently there are just a few houses left in the vicinity.

Ocate is the town located essentially in the center of the others and was larger than any of them. In the past, Ocate had a school called Number 8, four stores, a dance hall, and a blacksmith shop. It still has a church. Ocate never had a town plaza. All the houses in the town were made of adobe and were fairly large. The size of the house depended on the size of the family. A four-room house was not unusual. Most people in Ocate owned their own houses, but a few of them rented. Most of the people are Hispanic and many have resided there for a number of generations. For many years people have been very poor in this area. Store owners who came into the town to make money, had money to begin such a venture and generally were not of Spanish-American descent.

The town was previously much larger than it is now. In the past, according to several residents, there were approximately 400 people living in Ocate; the population presently numbers under 200 (Goodman 1991, field notes).

Two of the four stores in Ocate included the Strong store, located about 1 mile east of the center of town, and the Nathan Weil store, on the west side of NM 422 at the junction with NM 120. Nathan Weil, a French immigrant, moved into Ocate with his family and built his store in 1906. It was big and beautiful and had a huge storage area, barns, and a lovely house next door. Aside from selling a wide variety of goods, Weil was a major purchaser of local sheep, wool, cattle, hides, and grain. Large sacks of grain were stored on his property. For a time he served as village postmaster and notary public. The store itself served as the region's political and social center. Weil also developed large sheep and cattle operations in the area. In 1938, during the worst of the Depression, he closed his store and devoted his time to his ranching interests (Goodman 1991, field notes; *National Register of Historic Places* 1979).

The J. P. Strong store was established in 1913 in Ocate by John P. Strong, the youngest son of Richard Strong, who had operated other mercantile enterprises in Mora County. The Strong family ran this store until it burned down around 1941. Weil's old store had remained empty since 1938, so shortly after World War II, it was purchased by John Strong as a replacement for the destroyed store. The Strong family continued to run it until two of the sons sold it in 1960 to Donaciano Mondragon, a long-time employee. Mondragon continued to operate the store for the next 14 years until he closed it in 1974 (Fig. 13). He still owns the buildings (Goodman 1991, field notes; *National Register of Historic Places* 1979).

Both the Strong and Weil families became quite wealthy. Since their stores were so large and well stocked with everything from wedding dresses to wagons, the people of Ocate and surrounding villages did much of their trading and purchasing there. Both store owners extended credit to families in the area; however, when local residents could not pay their bills, their land was taken in payment. Many people lost their land in this way. According to those residents interviewed, the Strong store, located on the southwest corner of the junction of NM 422 and 120, closed approximately 18 years ago (Goodman 1991, field notes). The main building, associated outbuildings, and the house were

in disrepair, but still standing in 1991.

There were two other stores in the area as well. One, located approximately ¼ mile east of the present post office, belonged to Larnie Allen. It closed about 8 years ago. Now only one tiny store exists in Ocate, run by Tony Lopez and his family. It is located on the northwest corner of the junction of NM 422 and 120 (Goodman 1991, field notes).

In days past, there was a blacksmith shop across the road from the Strong store. The old post office at that time was in a large adobe building on the south side of NM 120 and about a ½-mile west of the junction with NM 422. This building had been a storehouse before it became a post office. The first post office was officially established in Ocate in 1866. According to Alex Mares (postmaster of Ocate for 48 years and now a retired elder in the village), a local post office was in existence prior to the 1866 date. Mr. Mares stated that the post office was first established in the Ocate Valley as a store, a stagecoach stop, and a pony express stop at *El Correo* (The Mail), on a portion of the Santa Fe Trail, about 16 miles east of Ocate (Fig. 10). When this portion of the route was abandoned, the post office was moved to the Calhoun Hills, where a store was built, about 8 miles east of Ocate. Still later, in 1866, the post office was relocated once again. Over the years, it has been moved a number of times within the village. Presently the post office is housed in a trailer in Ocate just to the east of the junction of NM 422 and 120 (Goodman 1991, field notes; Mares 1981:1).

The dance hall was a huge adobe building also across the road from the Strong store. Many dances, weddings, and political events were held there. No religious activities took place there, however. Social dances were accompanied by violin and guitar; couple dances such as waltzes were mostly performed. Occasionally, fights broke out over the girls attending the dances. There was a judge in Ocate and one had to obtain a permit from him to rent the hall for a dance. The renter then had the responsibility to police the dance. Some food was sold at these dances--ice cream and candy. The last dances probably occurred sometime in the early 1950s (Goodman 1991, field notes).

Most religious activities took place in the Catholic church in Ocate, the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Fig. 14). It is a well-maintained, attractive, whitewashed adobe building located approximately ¼-quarter mile southwest of the junction of NM 422 and 120. The priest comes from Wagon Mound every Sunday to conduct services. The Penitentes also existed in the Ocate area, but their activities were separate from the official Catholic church. A group of Penitentes are still active in the village of Los Hueros.

The Number 8 Public School in Ocate and all the other local schools in the surrounding villages are closed. The children in the region are bussed to school either in Mora or in Wagon Mound.

The whole valley formerly included a great many agricultural fields that were watered by an extensive irrigation system. There were enough permanent streams or springs in the area to provide adequate water for a ditch system. Each small village in the area had one or more irrigation ditches, some of which are still in use today. Los Hueros has two ditches presently in operation, Los Le Febres has one, and Ocate has one. The ditch servicing Naranjos had a diversion dam that washed out and was not replaced. Therefore, this ditch is presently not operational. The Ocate ditch begins north of the village at Cañada Bonita. From here it runs south and waters fields on the north side of Ocate Creek. In the past there was far more irrigation of the land in this area than there is now.



Figure 14. The Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Ocate, New Mexico. (Photo by Linda J. Goodman, August 1991)

As the amount of available ditch water has decreased over the years, farmers have had to depend more heavily on rainfall. Dry farming has largely, though not entirely, replaced irrigation farming. A number of families do have working wells on their land, but the water is for family use, not for irrigation. Presently, only minimal farming is occurring.

A number of the fields in this area are subirrigated. The water table normally is so high that often there is standing water in the fields during the summer. Grasses grow so well here that people gather them for winter hay for their livestock. Some sections of the valley are subject to much more subirrigation than others. (For example, Carlos Duran's fields have better subirrigation than do Benjamin Arguello's fields [Goodman 1991, field notes].) Subirrigation declined during the Great Depression and the drought of the 1930s when the water table receded. Recently it has begun to return to the more normal levels that preceded the droughts; the fields are also beginning to return to normal.

The agricultural season in the Ocate region was short. It began with the end of the frost season in mid-May and lasted until the middle of September, when the cold weather again set in. Most of the crops were grown for use by the nuclear and extended family and some were also for trade and exchange. Agricultural land was fenced roughly between 1910 and 1920 in order to keep the sheep and cattle out. Otherwise, much of the land in the area was not fenced until 20 to 25 years ago.

A number of people in the Ocate area worked as sharecroppers on the land. The land owner would allow a sharecropper to work a portion of his land for him. When the crop was harvested,

one-third of it went to the owner and two-thirds went to the sharecropper. Grain was primarily grown in this manner. The sharecropper families used the grain they grew to trade for other goods at the stores in Ocate. There was almost no money in use then. People survived by means of the barter system.

Because so much farming was done in the region, people would can their own fruit and vegetables, dry some of the fruit from their trees, and eat mostly their own fresh produce. Less of this occurs today because most are not growing their own fruits and vegetables.

Approximately 80 years ago, the grandfather of Carlos Fernandez had 300 acres of farmland located in Ocate east of the house where Carlos now lives--approximately 2 to 3 miles west of the junction of NM 422 and 120, on the north side of the road. When Carlos was quite young, his grandfather died and his uncles and his mother inherited the land. They grew grains, vegetables, and had an orchard full of apple, cherry, peach, plum, and pear trees. Carlos's mother started this orchard, which eventually died during the drought in the 1930s. Only a few trees presently remain. Carlos's mother and uncles eventually sold this land (specific data unavailable) and it has sold a number of times since then.

Carlos also had been a farmer when he was a young man. He worked as a sharecropper on some of the land in the area. He also worked as a mail carrier for 25 years from 1945-1970; he traveled on horseback, and his route went through Cañada Bonita and by Laguna Colorado to the north of Ocate.

There were many roads and trails throughout this area in days past. The old Ocate Trail, which is now NM 120, led to Black Lake and Taos. One person interviewed stated that no cars could travel on this trail, even in the 1950s. Only horses and donkeys could use it. Another person said that this trail formerly had been a wagon road, was destroyed in 1904 by a flood, but was reopened as a road in the 1930s. A second trail to Taos went by Cañada Bonita to the north. This was the regular mail route and the main route to Taos for many years. Eventually this road was closed, NM 120 was improved and has become the main route to Taos in this area. (Dates for these changes are unknown.) Another old trail to the north went to White's Peak (Fig. 11). As late as 1955 the road to Wagon Mound was still dirt.

Dirt roads connected all of the small villages in the area--different roads from those in use today. (The exact placement of those roads was not given by those interviewed.) According to Annie Fernandez, an Ocate elder, the roads were created using the most direct routes because much of the land was not fenced. Most of those old roads can no longer be used, due to the more recent addition of fences. Sixty years ago it took an entire day to travel to the town of Mora (25 miles away) by horse and buggy or uncovered wagon, and another day to return. Everyone had a team of horses, a buggy or an uncovered wagon, and a sleigh. People traveled everywhere using these forms of transportation, or on horseback (Goodman 1991, field notes).

Due to the remoteness and poverty of the Ocate area, electricity was not brought in until 1948 and some families did not have it until 1950. In 1955, running water and indoor plumbing were connected.

Sheep Raising in the Ocate Region in the Early to Mid-Twentieth Century

In the early 1900s, sheep raising was a major part of the local economy. Many families raised goats as well, which were included in the sheep herds. Some families only had a few sheep; others were major stock raisers. Annie Neurauter Fernandez, an Ocate elder, stated that she lived as a child with her uncle who only had two or three animals, not a large herd. He was basically a farmer. Four families in the area had large herds of sheep: the Arguellos, Garcias, Durans, and Pachecos. All four of these families still have descendants living in the area; however, there are no large herds any more. According to those interviewed, there are several contributing factors to the decline of this activity. First, the closing of the MacArthur Cattle Company in Wagon Mound was a major blow. This had been the establishment where the large sheep owners from Ocate always sold their sheep. They liked and trusted MacArthur and were comfortable dealing with him. The owners in Wagon Mound sold out when they grew old, and then the people from Ocate felt they had no reliable place that would handle their livestock dealings. (Written accounts state that after MacArthur died in 1912, the store changed hands again [Pratt 1986:131].) Apparently, people in Ocate were uncomfortable dealing with anyone other than MacArthur. (No statements were made concerning other establishments where they sold their sheep.) Later on, in the 1930s, the Depression set in, and at about the same time, major droughts hit the area. Both of these factors dealt serious blows to the local sheep industry. The land was dry, there was no water, and there was no money to purchase feed for the flocks. Sheep raisers lost many of their animals and the business became much less profitable. Many owners who could no longer survive by raising sheep in the Ocate region sold out and moved to the cities. Gradually, sheep herding died out.

Today, the village of Ocate has decreased in size. Most of the businesses have closed and the young people have moved away because so few jobs are available. Older people, who grew up there but moved away in order to earn a living, often return when they retire. No sheep operations currently exist. Instead, a number of wealthy individuals have purchased large tracts of land on which they presently run huge herds of cattle. These cattle ranches include the Ojo Feliz (formerly the Diamond A), the Mora Ranch, and the Stanley Ranch, among others.

In the past, sizeable sheep pastures were located on the south side of NM 120 across from Carlos and Annie Fernandez's house in Ocate. Sheep are no longer grazed there.

The Arguello Family and Its Sheep Business

The Arguello family has lived in the Ocate region for at least six generations and formerly had one of the large sheep-raising operations there until approximately the mid-1940s. From them one is able to learn about the fortunes of the sheep business in this area over time, as well as some of the specifics of sheep operations as handled by one family in the region.

The family of Benjamin Arguello, Sr., owns a sizeable parcel of land west of the house where he and his wife, Ernestine, live (Fig. 15). The house is about 3 miles northwest of the junction of NM 422 and 120. In the past, Ben's father and three uncles owned 11,000 acres on Le Febres Mesa. At different times, they kept approximately 2,000 to 6,000 head of sheep, 100 head of cattle, and they planted corn, peas, and pumpkins during times of drought. The fact that there are three springs that have never dried up on this land has helped the family to survive through the hardest of times.



Figure 15. Benjamin Arguello, Sr., in the entrance to his house, Ocate, New Mexico. Mr. Arguello knows much of the story of sheep-raising in the area. (Photo by Linda J. Goodman, August 1991)

As a boy, Ben Sr. worked for the Arguello Brothers who included his three uncles and his father. In this way, he learned about many of the tasks connected with his family's sheep business. He brought food to the shepherders in their camps and was paid \$12 per month for providing this service. The sheep camps in the 1920s consisted of either a tent camp or a sheep wagon with a trailer-type arrangement on top. Inside the sheep wagon would be two beds, a cook stove, a place to store the food, a table, and a lamp. Bags of grain and salt were stored under the wagon to protect them from the weather.

According to Ben Sr., two hired shepherders would normally be responsible for a herd, which could number up to 3,000 sheep. They also would have two sheep dogs and a couple of donkeys or horses to assist them. There were about six shepherders who normally worked for the Arguello brothers. At lambing time, they would often increase the number to eight or more who would help with the increased work load. Frequently neighbor children came to work for them for a very small amount of money during lambing season (Goodman 1991, field notes).

Lambing would occur in May each year, and at that time the herders lived in tent camps and put their bed rolls on the floor. There were special lambing places with a lot of good hay and grass where they regularly took the herds at this time. In these areas there were sheds and corrals to contain the animals. The "cutting" would also be done here, usually in June each year after lambing was over. In the corrals they would castrate the males and cut the tails of all the animals. When this was completed, the herds would move up to the top of Le Febres Mesa, southwest of Ocate (Goodman 1991, field notes). During the summer, the herders moved the sheep to good grazing areas about every 15 to 20 days, and during this time they would live in tent camps. They were free

to move the sheep to any good grazing land in the area before Catron controlled it. According to statements by Ben Arguello, Sr., after Catron changed the situation regarding grant common lands, people in the area were restricted and could only move their sheep to other pieces of their own land. Several others interviewed stated that the land was no longer free (Goodman 1991, field notes).

In late October or early November the herders moved the sheep from the top of the mesa down into the valley near Los Hueros in order to protect them from the severe winter weather. The length of time it took to move the sheep either to the mesa top or to the valley bottom varied from two to four days to as much as a week, based on local conditions (Goodman 1991, field notes).

During the fall, the herders culled the males from the females in the herds. Some years they sold an equal portion of each group or sometimes they sold more of the males to the feed lots (Goodman 1991, field notes).

During the winter, the herders lived in *huertes*, shelters made out of vigas. They were constructed like regular log cabins with four walls, a door, and small windows. These were built as more permanent camps for the sheepherders and provided better protection for them during the winter. The herders might still use the sheep wagon in the winter as well, depending on where the sheep were pastured (Goodman 1991, field notes).

Normally they built fairly small wooden pens for the sheep. Two or three pens would be built close to each other in the same area in order to keep the sheep from the cold and snow. Later in time, the wood was replaced with barbed wire to hold the sheep. (It is possible that the remains of such features are present at LA 74220.) Ernestine Arguello remembers seeing the sheepherders putting the sheep in such enclosures during the day for a few hours and coming into the main house for a good meal. They would then return and let the sheep out of the pens so they could feed again (Goodman 1991, field notes).

Another operation involved the cutting and storing of hay on Arguello land--to feed the cattle and the sheep. Each fall the hay was harvested in the Los Hueros area where it grew naturally. In the good vegas there was plenty of water and the grasses grew well. Hay was never a planted crop in the Ocate region, the grasses (blue grama and black grama) grew wild and were harvested and stored in large sheds in order to feed the animals during the winter (Goodman 1991, field notes).

Back in the 1800s, Ben Arguello Sr.'s great-grandfather started raising sheep in the Ocate area and was able to acquire a great deal of land. Ben's father, Natividad, was paid in sheep each year for the work he did. This helped him get a start in the sheep business, under the *partido* system (see p. 39). When they were adults, Natividad and his three brothers also purchased a great deal of land in the area and were able to increase their sheep herds.

According to Ben Sr., the family was doing well until Catron and Wheeler came into the area. In 1912, he said, they began applying pressure and many families in the area lost most of their land. His father and uncles had 6,000 head of sheep before these two outsiders illegally took the land. The Arguello family ended up selling most of their land. (Ben Sr. did not relate the details of how Catron was responsible for the family losing its land or why the Arguellos had to sell it; he only stated that these events occurred.) Natividad Arguello died at a young age and his wife divided their portion of the remaining land among their six children, one of whom was Ben Sr. In the 1940s, as other members of the Arguello family grew old, they sold much of what they still had. Certain

portions, however, were given to the children in the family. Most of the Arguello descendants still own some land in the area. During the 1950s and 1960s, Ben Sr. worked hard to gradually buy back portions of the family land and to acquire other parcels (including that where his house now stands) which had not belonged to his family earlier (Goodman 1991, field notes).

Ben Sr. always had loved the house he now owns. It was a pleasant, old, two-story house, abandoned and falling apart. It had two or three bedrooms, and the kitchen and dining area on the ground floor had been a dance hall around the turn of the century. Ben Sr.'s uncle, Andres Arguello, used to go to dances there in the late 1800s and early 1900s. By the late 1950s the abandoned house was nearly ready to fall down. The previous owner had let the cows wander through it, there were no doors, and all the windows were broken. However, Ben Sr. had a vision of how it could look once again, and for the past 30 years, he and his wife, Ernestine, have been fixing it up, bit by bit. It is attractive, quite comfortable, and the family is happy to be living in it.

Most of the property in the Ocate area is inherited. This is true of most of the families in the valley. All the children in the family own their own pieces of land, but in some cases one will manage the land for all of them, or one might buy out several or all the others in the family.

Cattle Raising in the Ocate Region

Even though sheep raising was the predominant economic activity in the area, some families had small numbers of cattle. Benjamin Arguello Sr.'s father and uncles kept approximately 100 head of cattle on their land. Cattle have increased in importance in the past 40 to 50 years and the sheep industry has declined. Anglos (often from Texas) have bought up portions of the land and begun serious cattle ranching. Presently they run Herefords on the land.

Economics of the Ocate Region

In the past, most families around Ocate lived modestly but comfortably. The common lands of the Mora Grant gave them enough space to raise large herds of sheep and a few cattle. Fertile agricultural land and adequate water allowed them to raise enough crops to be self-sufficient to insure their survival. Thomas Means, who first surveyed the Mora Grant, was in the Ocate area on August 2, 1861, and wrote a description of the area at that time. He stated that there were "many settlements in a prosperous state, cultivated farms, excellent grass and abundant timber. The mountains are very rich" (Means 1861:1).

In the early 1900s, Ocate people were engaged in a variety of other occupations as well. For example, Carlos Fernandez's maternal grandfather worked as a carpenter. He helped local people build their houses and he also did various small jobs. Mr. Fernandez's paternal grandfather was a farmer in Ocate. Annie Neurauter Fernandez's paternal grandfather came from Germany and was a soldier at Ft. Union. He married a local girl and settled in the area.

The Arguellos, Garcias, Durans, and the Pachecos were all large sheep-owning families. Some men from the area worked as shepherds for them. Others made ties for the railroad, then

hauled them to Watrous by wagon to sell. A few people were teachers in the local schools. Some families gathered hay, which they sold in Watrous. At one time there were twelve sawmills in the area (northwest and southwest of Ocate, according to those interviewed) and a great deal of logging was done even into the 1940s and 1950s in the surrounding mountains (Goodman 1991, field notes).

According to Ocate residents, the people there had not been poor when they had the common lands for grazing. With the reduced land base, overgrazing became a serious problem, compounded by droughts. The Depression, which preceded the drought, began the cycle of bad times and bad luck for the local population. Beginning in 1930, a severe seven-year drought affected the Ocate area. (According to Benjamin Arguello, Sr., the dust bowl existed in this part of New Mexico as well as in Oklahoma.) The government required that local people kill portions of their flocks because of the droughts. Families butchered their animals, dried all the meat, and used it. The land, however, continued to blow away and times were difficult. There was a great deal of population loss at the time of the Depression and the drought. Many people moved to the cities in search of work. Those who remained in Ocate worked very hard to survive during this time. When World War II began a few years later, more people left Ocate for various defense factory jobs (Goodman 1991, field notes). With the land base largely gone, it has been difficult to survive in the Ocate region since the 1930s; thus the population has decreased over time.

Today it is difficult for young people to find steady employment in Ocate. Logging, agriculture, and the sheep industry have, for all practical purposes, ceased to exist. Public schools have been removed from the area. Most young people are forced to leave the area. A few find jobs and commute to Las Vegas, Wagon Mound, Mora, or Angel Fire. Others must go farther afield to Albuquerque or Grants, Pueblo or Denver, Colorado. The Ocate post office employs a few people as do the cattle ranches in the area. Often it is older men rather than younger men who are employed on the cattle ranches. At times, younger people will go into the forests and cut firewood to sell. Today, mostly older, retired people live in and around Ocate. Many of them come from well-established old Spanish-American families from the area. The cattle ranches are now mostly big outfits, some of whose owners came from Texas and run operations such as the Mora Ranch, Stanley Ranch, and Ojo Feliz Ranch.

INFORMATION CONCERNING LA 74220

Very little specific information relating to LA 74220 could be obtained. Though it is probable that the circular stone structures and remains of a barbed-wire fence on the site are remnants of old sheep pens, no shepherders could be found in the Ocate area to verify this. For approximately 30 to 40 years there has been no sheep herding in the area and residents stated that all the former herders have long been deceased. Those interviewed from Ocate knew nothing specific about LA 74220. Several of them walked the site with the author, but had no knowledge of ownership or use, even after seeing the remains of the features. Alex Mares thought it likely that LA 74220 had been used as sheep pens and a sheep camp, but he also thought it was possible that the Comanches of days past had used stone markers such as those at LA 74220 to designate the spot where they had hidden a large cache of arrows to be used for warfare.

Written descriptions have been found for only two types of features that were often found in pasture areas. *Chimney corners*, at one time located every few miles on the range, were features built of stones by the Spanish herders that greatly resembled old-fashioned open fireplaces. In the winter, the *pastores* would pitch their tents close to them. The second type of feature was called a *majonera*, or monument. Located in the foothills, it would consist of a pile of rocks 5 or 6 ft high and about 2 ft square. It indicated that water was nearby (Pratt 1986:132-133; Parrish 1962:212-213). The rock features present on LA 74220 do not appear to fit either of these descriptions.

Ownership History of the Land on which LA 74220 is Located

Several Ocate elders remembered that approximately 80 to 90 years ago, Juan Antonio Vigil had been a farmer whose land was located just below the mouth of Manueles Canyon and they thought that he had some cattle and sheep and perhaps a little camp up the canyon. None of them knew the location of this camp, however. They also stated that the Espinosas and then the Martinezes owned this land before Juan Vigil did. No information was available concerning these families. Due to complications caused by the Mora Land Grant situation and the following ownership by Catron, the complete specific ownership history of the land on which LA 74220 is located could not be discovered in the time allotted for this study.

According to the available records in the Mora County Courthouse and information gathered by Clark S. Knowlton (1988), the ownership history of LA 74220 is approximately as follows. Originally, in 1835, LA 74220 was situated on the Mora Grant. Specific ownership is unknown. This land is thought to have been included in parcels acquired by Thomas B. Catron in 1870 and for which he received a patent in 1876. He then deeded it to his son, Charles C. Catron in 1909, who was never able to establish clear title to it. The Catron interests, which presumably still included LA 74220, were sold to Frank Roy of Las Vegas on February 13, 1913. On February 22, 1916, the Catron lands were purchased by the State Investment Company of Las Vegas, which included George A. Flemming, William Shillinglaw, and Reeve Eagle (see Appendix 1).

The ownership information concerning this land after 1916 is sketchier. Since the Mora County Abstract Company would not allow an examination of their records, the following ownership

information is incomplete and could not be verified. It was acquired through oral interviews with Ocate residents and from very recent material available in the Mora County Assessors Office. According to one of the Ocate elders, LA 74220 may have been purchased by Nathan Weil, owner of one of the Ocate general stores for many years. Exactly when he acquired this land and how long he held it, is not known. One Ocate resident thought that Weil had purchased it from Catron. The intervening land transfers to other owners appear not to have been widely known by the elders residing in Ocate today. Residents stated that at some point before 1970, a large parcel of land, which included LA 74220, was acquired by Keith Glasscock of Texas. The exact date of purchase is unknown. He mortgaged this land to Corina B. Pickett of Amarillo, and when he could not make the payments, he lost it. The Picketts (now of Lubbock and Angel Fire) then became the new owners from approximately 1970 to 1978. They are said to have sold much of this land to a development corporation in Lubbock, Texas, called Peaks and Pines, which wanted to establish a housing subdivision on the west side of Ocate Creek. Residents of Ocate thought that LA 74220 was part of the land sold to Peaks and Pines. No dates are known for this purchase. The housing development never materialized. According to the Mora County Assessor's records, the land with LA 74220 on it (called Tract 4C) is presently owned by Francis Renz (currently residing in Albuquerque, New Mexico), who acquired it in 1987.

Activities in the Immediate Vicinity of LA 74220

Alex Mares, aged 83, was born and lived all his life in the Ocate Valley, and is the local resident historian, recited what he knew of the oral tradition concerning the area including LA 74220 (Fig. 16). He said that long ago the Miami brothers grazed their sheep on top of the mesa above LA 74220 and on north to Rayado. At that time (date unknown) the whole area was only grassland and rock. The oak and pine vegetation, which currently covers the area, has appeared much more recently (in the past 30 to 40 years). Sometimes the Miami brothers brought their sheep down on the south side of what is today NM 120, but mostly they kept them up on top. (Nothing further is known about this family or their sheep operation.) Alex stated that Nathan Weil, the long-time owner of one of the general stores in Ocate, bought a large portion of Mora Grant land from Catron. This land was located up Manueles Canyon on the south side of NM 120 and included LA 74220. (The dates of Weil's ownership are unknown as is the manner in which he acquired the land). Weil ran approximately 2,000 to 3,000 sheep on this land for many years. He also had other large herds near Roy and Wagon Mound. As a young man, Alex Mares knew Weil, and knew that he was a wealthy man who owned many sheep and a lot of land in the region. Weil hired herders to run the sheep for him.

According to Alex Mares, the house located ¼-mile north and west of LA 74220 and outside of the right-of-way, had been owned by Vidal Vigil, who farmed on the land adjacent to the Ocate River (see Fig. 11). (The foundation of this house was located by Sarah Schlanger and Linda Goodman in January of 1991.) Mr. Vigil raised mostly potatoes, which grew very well in Manueles Canyon, and he also had a few cows. He lived for a number of years in the canyon with his family and then later moved into Ocate proper. He was about 90 years old when he died in the 1930s. His house was not reoccupied after he left it, probably sometime early in the twentieth century. (It is not known if he was related to Juan Antonio Vigil, who was mentioned earlier.)



Figure 16. Alex Mares standing by LA 74220 in August 1991. A lifelong Ocate resident, Mr. Mares knows much of the history of the local region. (Photo by Linda J. Goodman)



Figure 17. The Juan Manueles house (located in Manueles Canyon) formerly stood in the clearing in the left-center of the photograph; facing northeast. (Photo by Linda J. Goodman)

The house just north and slightly west of Vidal Vigil's house (and outside of the right-of-way) was owned by Juan Manueles. He was the first inhabitant of the canyon, and it was named after him (see Fig. 11). (Sarah Schlanger and Linda Goodman located the foundations of this house also in January 1991.) Juan Manueles had a large family, so the house was big, partly made of adobe and partly of flagstone (Fig. 17). It had several hornos (adobe, beehive-shaped outdoor ovens). All the houses in Ocate had at least one horno until 40 or 50 years ago. The Manueles family lived in their home in the canyon before Alex Mares was born in 1908. Alex thought they might have lived there in the 1860s, but did not know if they had been farmers or if they ran sheep. He thought they might have farmed. This entire portion of Manueles Canyon, from the Manueles family land (and including LA 74220) down to the mouth of the canyon, had been open grassland since Alex was born in 1908, and probably long before as well. (Several others interviewed emphasized the same point.) It had been excellent land for grazing sheep. Some areas had been good for farming. According to Alex, however, over the past 30 to 40 years or so, no one has been running sheep or farming, and the meadows and grasslands are filling in with large stands of scrub oak, ponderosa pines, and aspen trees. Most of the pasture and farmland in the canyon are gone (Goodman 1991, field notes).

Other Points of Interest along NM 120 in Manueles Canyon

Alex Mares was most generous in sharing his knowledge concerning other points of interest in Manueles Canyon. Beginning at the landmark of the Manueles family house foundation, these sites are described in sequential order, moving northwest up the canyon. Specific map designations are presently unavailable. The hill south of NM 120 and to the southwest of the Manueles land, was where Juan Le Febre, another early settler in the area had a mine. Beautiful purple rocks, about the size of one's fist, came from that mine, but Alex Mares did not know what they were. Alex visited that mine as a boy. Juan Le Febre was about 80 years old when Alex went to visit that mine, somewhere around 1915. A number of years ago, Alex climbed the hill again in order to search for the mine, but was unable to locate it. The entire area had been overgrown with vegetation and the deep hole where the mine had been was no longer visible. Another mine was discovered by Alex, farther west of this one, but nothing valuable was assayed from it during Alex's lifetime.

Farther on up the canyon, on the north side of NM 120, had been another adobe house, now completely gone. Alex knew it was there and where it had been located, but he did not know who had lived in it.

West up the canyon was a huge expanse of land formerly owned by Ed Mares, Alex's older brother. Ed did receive a patent for this land long ago and built a log cabin on it. (Patent information on this land and possibly the pieces owned by Vidal Vigil and Juan Manueles should be available at the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C.) The cabin, built by Ed Mares, is still standing. It is located just south of the Mora-Colfax County line, on the north side of NM 120. Before he died, Ed Mares left this land to Willie Lucero, a retired Ocate school teacher.

A sawmill, which had been run by one of the outlaws who lived in the area, had been located to the southwest of the land owned by Ed Mares. This outlaw's name, according to Alex, was Bob Simon, and he was the son-in-law of Juan Le Febre, having married Le Febre's daughter. Bob Simon issued bad titles to people for their land and they ended up losing it. He always carried a gun, everywhere he went; Alex, as a small child, remembered seeing him. The people in the area hated

him for being dishonest and cheating them and eventually they killed him. Alex recalled that one time, 'old man Weil,' the owner of the store in Ocate, wouldn't extend credit to Simon, so Simon called in his "boys" and told them to go into the store and load up a wagon with goods. This was done at gunpoint and Weil could do nothing about it.

According to Alex Mares, the county line, separating Mora from Colfax counties, is the place where the old Ocate Trail, going from Ocate Crossing to Taos, ended in 1904. Before that time, the dirt road had gone all the way to Black Lake and then on to Taos. In 1904 there was a huge flood in Manueles Canyon and it washed out the road northwest of the county line. From that point on, one could only get to Taos on horseback; it was impassible for wagons and teams of horses. One had to follow the stream bed up to Black Lake. It remained in this condition until 1930 when Governor Dillon requested that the road be reclaimed and reopened. The land from the county line to the top of the canyon is mainly good for timber. It has always been heavily wooded.

To return to LA 74220, this site most likely included former sheep pens and a sheep camp, which was located at the junction between NM 120 and a trail heading to the top of Ocate Mesa. Apparently NM 120 was formerly an old trail to Taos before becoming a highway. The surrounding area is rich with the history of sheep operations and agricultural ventures, which allowed a number of Spanish-American families to survive successfully in the Ocate region for approximately 100 years. LA 74220 was the site of a small portion of that history. As successful sheep operations declined, so did the use of LA 74220. At the present time, no improvements have been made on the land. It remains in its natural state.

SUMMARY OF ETHNOHISTORIC RESEARCH RESULTS

Initially, eight questions were raised when the ethnohistoric research for this project was undertaken. The data included in the previous sections of this report were gathered in order to respond to these questions. The answers (in some cases more complete than others) provide more understanding of LA 74220 in relation to its former uses and its cultural surroundings in the late 1800s and first half of the 1900s.

1. Who used LA 74220, for what purposes, and when? What was their position in the community?

It appears that several sheep operations used LA 74220, probably between 1880 and 1945. Structural and archaeological remains show evidence of four sheep pens and a probable camping site. Oral interviews have expanded this picture. Before 1950, Manueles Canyon, including the area where LA 74220 is located, provided excellent pasture land for sheep. The entire canyon was covered with thick grass, which grew in and around the rock formations. Oak, ponderosa, and spruce have appeared only since the disappearance of regular use of this area for sheep grazing. Because of its location, between the mesa tops above and the broad valley below, Manueles Canyon apparently was used when moving sheep from winter range to summer range and back again. Depending on the condition of the grass when the sheep were moved, the animals would be allowed to remain in one area from two to seven days before moving on. Thus, it is likely that Manueles Canyon and LA 74220 were used at least twice a year (and perhaps more often) during the time when sheep raising was a reasonable, and sometimes profitable, venture in the Ocate region (approximately 1880 to 1945). (Archaeological data support dates of 1880s to 1930s.)

One person interviewed recalled two different sheep operations running stock through the canyon in the distant past. The Miami brothers were probably the first; their main pasture land was on top of Ocate Mesa. Later in time, most likely, was the Weil sheep operation. Weil was supposed to have either owned or had rights to use the land in the canyon, as well as other large tracts in the area, and his sheep were moved through Manueles Canyon regularly. Written records have not been discovered, and dates for either of these operations are unknown. (A rough approximation might place these operations between the 1890s and 1930s.)

Normally, fairly small, wooden pens were built to contain the sheep; these were later replaced by barbed-wire pens. Finding nails on the site might indicate the earlier presence of wooden pens. (Often wood was scavenged and reused; or if decaying, it might be taken for firewood during cold weather. Therefore, wood remains are not often found on abandoned sites in a remote area such as this.) The appearance of several types of barbed wire, one piece still wrapped around a tree trunk, would imply the use of this material for pens as well. The small size of the pens, 4 to 5 m in diameter, rules out their use for holding cattle.

According to those interviewed, a temporary sheep camp during the 1880s to 1945 consisted either of a tent camp or a sheep wagon with internal living quarters for two shepherders. Archaeological investigations would not be able to verify this information unless the actual remains of these structures were abandoned on the site and were not scavenged at a later time. The appearance of old tin cans, bottle glass, and butchered bone on the site indicates that LA 74220 had been used as a

shepherders' camp as well as a place to pen the sheep. The fact that the cultural remains were sparse might imply that the site was not used regularly as a camping place or else that the shepherders took most of their garbage with them when they moved on.

Within the local community, shepherders occupied a low social status. They were looked down on by farmers and local businessmen. They were paid extremely low wages for the work they did--lower than others were paid for various other kinds of work during the same time period. (Dollar figures were not stated by those interviewed.) By way of contrast, the owners of the sheep operations occupied a rather high position in the community. Often they were financially comfortable, in some cases quite wealthy, and were esteemed members of the community.

2. Who owned the land on which LA 74220 was constructed?

It is clear that LA 74220 was originally part of the Mora Land Grant of 1835. Its later ownership history becomes more complicated because of shady dealings with the land grant legal status involving the Catron family, among a host of others. The land has been bought and sold a number of times since 1870 and currently is owned by Francis Renz of Albuquerque. Please refer to Appendix 1 for a partial list of owners of LA 74220.

3. When was LA 74220 actually in use?

An approximate time frame of 1880s-1945 has been established based upon information given by those interviewed as well as that gathered from published reports and archaeological investigations. The danger of Indian attack in this region was not removed until the late 1870s, thus discouraging large sheep operations much before then. The appearance of the railroad in Wagon Mound by 1879 made it much easier to transport sheep to market from this time on. One person interviewed, presently 80 years old, stated that his great-grandfather had started a stable sheep operation in the Ocate region as a young man, roughly 110+ years ago. This would place it in the late 1870s to early 1880s. It is reasonable to suggest that this particular sheep operation was not an isolated example at that time and that others were being initiated simultaneously.

Other evidence relates to findings on the site. The three types of barbed wire found on the site all were patented in the late 1870s, thus supporting an approximate 1880s occupation date. The nails and fence staples have been in use continuously since the 1850s; the purple bottle glass was manufactured between 1880 and 1920, suggesting use during this period. One of the two food cans found on the site has been manufactured since 1904; the other between 1850 and 1930. Therefore, an initial date in the 1880s for utilization of the site seems reasonable.

In the 1930s, economic depression and drought hit the region hard and many sheep operations did not survive. Some, however, did survive into the 1940s according to several people interviewed. Since some of the material remains found on the site are still being manufactured today, it is not unreasonable to suggest that LA 74220 may have been in use until the end of the sheep raising period in the Ocate area in the mid-1940s.

4. What kinds of animals were penned at the site?

Sheep were penned at LA 74220. No information was available concerning the species raised in this area. See the response to question number 1, above, for a fuller explanation of sheep herding in Manueles Canyon. The size of the pens would have eliminated the possibility of cattle being kept there.

5. What other nonstock-related activities took place at the site?

From the archaeological remains found at LA 74220, it is likely that the site was used as a camp by shepherders once or several times during its useful life. (See answers to question number 1 above for more details.) It was hypothesized by one person interviewed that the site might have been used by Comanche Indians in the past to bury caches of arrows that could be used when they were in the area and needed them. There is no factual evidence to support this statement at this time. No other nonstock-related uses are known.

6. What was the role of livestock in the economy of the greater Ocate area?

Sheepherding along with agriculture were the two economic mainstays of the Ocate area since the time of its official recognition in 1835 as part of the Mora Land Grant. Residents on the grant (most, though not all, of whom were Spanish-American) had the right to graze their sheep on the grant common lands, which were free and open to all. Livestock was raised mostly for subsistence purposes at that time. It was not until the 1880s that large sheep operations began to develop in the area. (See answers to questions number 1 and 3 above for more details.) They remained of primary economic importance in the area until about 1930. Economic depression combined with seven years of severe drought greatly reduced the number of successful sheep operations in the Ocate region. Some managed to survive for approximately another ten to fifteen years, but eventually all sheep operations ceased. Sheep no longer play a role in the economy of the area.

7. Why did LA 74220 fall into disuse and how does this relate to the changing economy of the Ocate area?

The actual reason for the abandonment of LA 74220 can only be surmised. As sheep operations became less profitable due to economic depression and drought in the 1930s, people sold out or just abandoned their enterprises and moved out of the area in search of work. There came a time when those who were running sheep through Manueles Canyon no longer found their operations profitable and quit the business. It is also possible that a sheep owner died and the business was not carried on by his descendants. According to several people interviewed, it was after Catron and Wheeler took the land that the people in this area became poor. (This statement was made numerous times and is still of utmost significance to the long-time residents of Ocate. They no longer remember the details, but the general picture is clearly drawn in their minds.) It is possible that when New Mexico became a state in 1912, a whole series of new laws and regulations went into effect that had a negative impact on the people in this area (Schlanger, pers. comm., 1991). Time was not available to pursue this subject. Local residents did not hold homestead patents to their land nor did they hold permits that allowed grazing on public land. Even though Catron and Wheeler created initial

problems relating to land and livelihood in this area, state laws may have dealt local residents the final blow. The fact that the Mora Land Grant, with its rights of land use and ownership, had never been officially recognized by the U.S. government, complicated the entire picture. People in Ocate had not been poor before this. Now their common lands for grazing were gone. Droughts also hit them hard and overgrazing became a serious problem. They no longer had good places to graze their sheep. Their crops failed as well during the dry years. Sheep raising and agriculture were abandoned, and making a living in the area has been difficult ever since.

8. How did the Ocate community function during the critical transition from locally controlled economies to the loss of people to wage-labor pursuits that took them away from the community, and how did the community come to be as it is today?

According to statements by those interviewed, Ocate was a community of self-supporting families during the time they controlled their own agricultural initiatives and sheep-raising pursuits. Some families became wealthy, but no one was poor. As the land base eroded, due to illegal maneuvering in the early 1900s, local economic endeavors became less profitable. To worsen the situation, this factor later combined with the economic depression in the 1930s, which reduced the markets for sheep and agricultural products as well as lumber (forcing sawmills to close). At the same time, drought caused a severe reduction in agricultural output and in numbers of livestock. The community responded in the only way it could. When people could no longer make a living in the area, they were forced to move away. A small town slowly began to shrink and die. The area could no longer support four stores, so they began closing. The last one closed its doors about eight years ago. Now there is only one small store, the Lopez store, containing very little stock, where tourists or locals can pick up a few necessities. World War II saw more people move away in order to work in munitions factories in other areas. With no work for them in Ocate, there was no reason to remain.

Since the end of the war, there has been little change in the situation--without jobs there is no way young adults can survive in the area. Even the local schools were forced to close and the remaining children are bussed to Wagon Mound or Mora. Texas ranchers have moved in, bought up much of the land, and started large cattle operations. These employ very few local young people. Therefore, they leave Ocate to find jobs elsewhere or to go to college and then find jobs away from home. Only a few young adults have found jobs in the vicinity and are able to live in Ocate. Most are still forced to live elsewhere. Upon retirement, however, those who grew up in Ocate often return to spend their final years there. It is a quiet, peaceful area and the cost of living is low. It has now become more of a retirement community, with people living mostly on their modest social security payments, retirement income, and savings.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LA 74220 includes the remains of four sheep pens and a probable sheepherder camp site, located in the right-of-way on the west side of N.M. 120 in Manueles Canyon. The area appears to have been used intermittently between 1880 and 1945. LA 74220 is important because it documents the presence of sheep raising activities in this canyon and illustrates the type and location of a site used during seasonal migration of sheep in the Ocate region. LA 74220 was utilized, according to statements by informants, when sheep were moved between summer and winter ranges. Because sheepherding operations no longer exist in the area, and no former shepherds presently live nearby, it was not possible to discover specific ethnohistoric material relating to LA 74220. Therefore, archaeological testing data were synthesized with available oral history and other socio-economic information in order to present a picture of former sheepherding activity in the vicinity of Ocate.

This study also increased knowledge of the change of flora in Manueles Canyon over a 75-year period. In the early 1900s, the area was largely dominated by open grasslands, good for grazing. With the demise of the sheep enterprises, the forest has gradually encroached on the grasslands. Now, relatively dense coniferous forests are punctuated by a few meadows that provide the remaining good graze for livestock.

Study of LA 74220 has taken the form of archaeological testing and ethnohistoric examination. Because more specific data regarding this site are not available, no additional investigation is recommended.

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APPENDIX 1. PARTIAL LIST OF OWNERS OF LA 74220

| Owner | Approx. Date of Initial Ownership |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Mora Land Grant | 1835 |
| Thomas B. Catron | 1870 |
| Charles C. Catron | 1909 |
| Frank Roy | 1913 |
| State Investment Co. of Las Vegas: George A. Flemming William Shillinglaw Reeve Eagle | 1916 |
| ? | ? |
| Nathan Weil(?) | ? |
| Keith Glasscock | before 1970 |
| Corina B. Pickett | 1970 |
| Peaks and Pines Development, Inc. | 1978(?) |
| Francis Renz | 1987 |

APPENDIX 2. PEOPLE INTERVIEWED REGARDING OCATE

Benjamin Arguello, Sr., 80 years old, born in Ocate, lived most of his life there; worked for Arguello Brothers sheep operation, later for New Mexico Department of Motor Vehicles in Las Vegas.

Ernestine Martinez Arguello, approximately 65 years old, originally from Taos. Wife of Benjamin Arguello, Sr. She worked as a teacher for many years, some of that time in Wagon Mound. She has lived in Ocate for 30 years.

Benjamin W. Arguello, approximately 30 years old. Son of Ben, Sr., and Ernestine Arguello. Has lived most of his life in Ocate. Has been Ocate postmaster for 8 years.

Carlos Fernandez, about 80, born and raised in Ocate; has lived there most of his life; former mail carrier from 1945 to 1970.

Annie Neurauter Fernandez, about 75, born and raised in Ocate; has lived most of her life there; wife of Carlos Fernandez.

Max Lopez, about 25, born and raised in Ocate; currently lives and works in Albuquerque.

Alex Mares, 83 years old, born and raised in Ocate; has lived most of his life there; former postmaster of Ocate from 1935 to 1983; local historian.