

FIRST DRAFT

N.M. Puebloans reclaimed their land from Spanish in Native revolt

In early August of 1680, runners spread out across northern New Mexico and Arizona. They carried knotted pieces of cord and instructions for the headmen at each Pueblo they visited:

“Untie one knot each day. When no knots remain, attack the Spaniards.”

On August 10, 1680, the residents of several dozen pueblos in New Mexico and Arizona did just that, taking their Spanish conquerors by surprise and thus initiating the only successful attempt by Natives in North America to drive European colonists from their territory.

The uprising was all the more remarkable because it involved people from far-flung communities who spoke a half-dozen different languages and who were often at odds with each other. Yet they all united behind a single leader called Po'pay, from a Pueblo near Santa Fe.

It took a dozen years before the Spanish were able to reconquer this land they called Nuevo Mexico. When they did, there would be new rules for treatment of the Natives.

These new rules were hardly compassionate by today's standards, but they were far better than the brutal practices used prior to the revolt.

There were other changes. The Spanish realized they couldn't rule all the Natives by brute force, so they began to ally themselves with certain groups, especially the Puebloans who lived near the Spanish communities, against roving, nomadic tribes.

One of the most far-reaching changes involved horses. Native people who had once been banned from riding Spanish horses suddenly had access to thousands of them. This included residents of the Pueblos, but also nomadic people, such as the Utes, Apaches and Navajos.

After the 1680 revolt, “hundreds of horses — perhaps more than 1,500 — were left behind, the largest number to pass into Native hands at one time,” according to a Smithsonian Institution online exhibit.

Some sources estimate as many as 5,000 horses were taken. “These horses became the ancestors of many tribal herds. The Pueblo people traded horses to neighboring tribes, and the horse population expanded rapidly across North America.”

The roots of the Pueblo revolt date at least to 1598, when Juan de Oñate led a group of Spaniards and Mestizos north from Mexico to found the colony of Nuevo Mexico.

His retinue included 560 colonists, 129 soldiers, eight Franciscan friars and two lay brothers, as well as 7,000 head of livestock.

His first encounters with different groups of villagers were peaceful. Leaders of 33 Pueblos along the Rio Grande River signed a document pledging their loyalty to Spain, although it's doubtful they understood what they were signing due to poor translations.

Another governor, Juan Francisco Trevino, ordered the arrest of 47 shamans from various Pueblos. Three were hanged, one committed suicide and the other 43



EDWARD S. CURTIS PHOTO THROUGH THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
San Juan Pueblo north of Santa Fe, as it appeared in 1927. Po'pay was from this Pueblo.



NATIONAL STATUARY HALL COLLECTION, ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

This statue of Pueblo Revolt leader Po'pay was presented to the U.S. Capitol building by the state of New Mexico in 2005. Although there are no drawings or written descriptions of Po'pay, sculptor Cliff Fragua said he used a design based on a traditional Pueblo male hairstyle and clothing. Po'pay holds the knotted cord used to signal the beginning of the revolt.

However, in October 1598, residents of the Acoma Pueblo, west of today's Albuquerque, rebuffed demands that they pay homage to the Spanish Crown, and killed Oñate's nephew in the process.

Oñate retaliated. He attacked Acoma and killed 800 of the residents. Another 580 were taken captive and sentenced to 20 years of servitude. Males over age 25 had their right feet cut off.

Brutality continued even after Oñate left. As author David Roberts wrote: “More than one governor of New Mexico set himself up as an absolute despot, growing rich off the labor of Indians reduced to virtual slavery.”

Intolerable tax systems forced the pueblos to give ever more of their produce to the Spaniards while their own people faced starvation.

Pueblo women were sexually exploited, often raped, even by the supposedly celibate Franciscan friars. The Spaniards also demanded the Puebloans abandon their idolatrous kachina religion for Christianity.

But the kachinas, which served as intermediaries between the Puebloans and their deities, weren't surrendered willingly. Even 75 years after Oñate colonized Nuevo Mexico, the fight continued.

Another governor, Juan Francisco Trevino, ordered the arrest of 47 shamans from various Pueblos. Three were hanged, one committed suicide and the other 43

were viciously flogged until they renounced their religion.

When a mass of protesters showed up in Santa Fe to demand the release of the shamans, Trevino relented and the men were set free. One of them was a 45-year-old spiritual leader from San Juan Pueblo named Po'pay.

It's believed that Po'pay spent the next five years secretly visiting as many of the pueblos as possible, describing his vision for driving the Spaniards from the Rio Grande Valley and surrounding territory.

The attack that started the revolt was actually planned for Aug. 11, the night of the new moon. But captured runners were tortured until they revealed the plot to Don Antonio de Otermin, the Spanish governor of Nuevo Mexico in 1680.

So, Po'pay ordered the attack moved forward a day.

Amazingly, the people in the far-flung pueblos received the word and still caught the Spanish flat-footed.

On Aug. 10, the Puebloans killed 21 of the 33 Franciscan friars then in Nuevo Mexico.

From Taos Pueblo south to near present-day Albuquerque and west as far as Hopi Mesa in today's Arizona (at the time it was part of Nuevo Mexico), the uprising took the lives of 380 Spanish settlers — men, women and children.

About 1,500 Spanish settlers south of today's Albuquerque retreated south along the Rio Grande toward the Spanish outpost at El Paso.

In the north, about 1,000 Spaniards took refuge with Gov. Otermin in the stockade at Santa Fe, which is believed to have been roughly where today's Palace of the Governors stands.

On Aug. 15, at least 500 Pueblo warriors laid siege to the stockade. Over the next few days, more warriors, including Po'pay, arrived.

Otermin estimated there were 2,500 Pueblo fighting men outside the stockade.

They blocked a small ditch that provided the

only drinking water to the stockade and fired arrows, rocks and musket balls from recovered Spanish arquebuses over the walls.

On Aug. 20, Otermin led a surprise counterattack through the gates, which he claimed killed 300 Puebloans while he lost only five men.

The Puebloans retreated and that allowed the inhabitants of the stockade to escape. On Aug. 21, they began a slow retreat down the Rio Grande toward El Paso and safety.

Along the way, they saw the ruins of Spanish rancherias and of the Franciscan churches, some with the rotting corpses of friars inside.

Why the Puebloans didn't attack the retreating Spaniards is unclear. Otermin vowed to return and reconquer Nuevo Mexico to make up for his defeat. But it was not to be. He was stripped of his governorship shortly after he reached Mexico City.

It was left to another man, Don Diego Jose de Vargas, to accomplish the reconquest beginning in 1692.

By then Po'pay had died, and the unified pueblos had splintered into different factions. De Vargas was able to claim he reconquered Nuevo Mexico without spilling any blood. And he did.

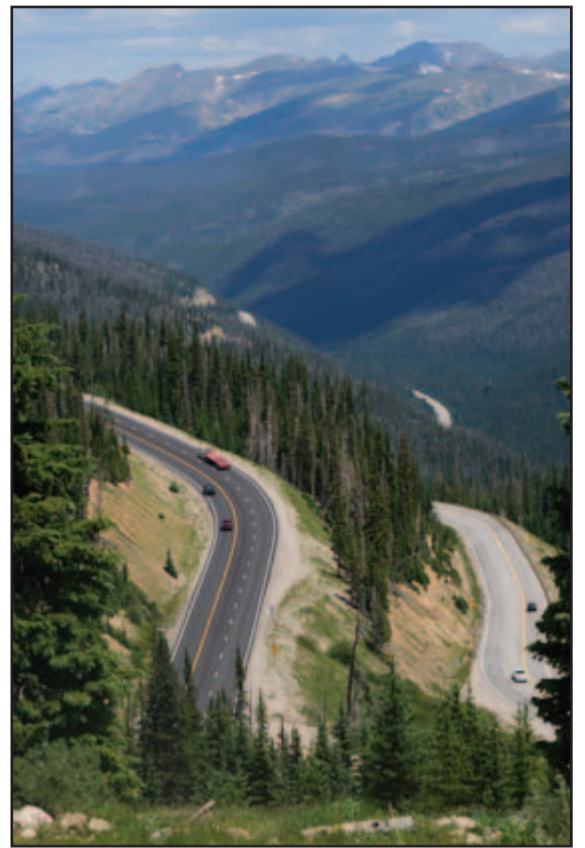
But over the next few years, Spanish soldiers under his command spilled significant amounts of Puebloan blood to secure the reconquest.

Still, for a dozen years, the Puebloans had been free of their Spanish overlords as a result of Po'pay's planning of the only successful Native uprising against European colonizers in North America's history.

Sources: “Pueblo Revolt,” by David Roberts; “A Song for the Horse Nation: Horses in Native American Culture,” Smithsonian Institution, <https://americanindian.si.edu/exhibitions/horse-nation/spread.html>; “The Pueblo Revolt of 1680: America's First Revolution,” <https://newmexicomad.com/the-pueblo-revolt-of-1680>.

Most information we have about the revolt comes from Spanish documents. Pueblo oral histories about the event have been shared very little with outsiders.

Bob Silbernagel's email is bobsilbernagel@gmail.com.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOUNTAIN MOTORING

Motorists guide their vehicles along Colorado Highway 40 over Berthoud Pass near Winter Park. The pass is west of Denver and traverses the Continental Divide. Its elevation is 11,307 feet.

Heat breaks record in Denver

PORTLAND, Ore. — The Pacific Northwest braced for yet another heat wave and the temperature in Denver hit 101 degrees Fahrenheit on Friday, breaking a record set in 1877.

In Denver, temperatures cooled somewhat Saturday into the lower 90s after peaking Friday. It was the fifth time this year that the mercury climbed to 100 or above in Denver.

In Idaho, temperatures in Boise could rise as high as 103, but the National Weather Service said the forecasted heat wouldn't be enough to break the record of 106 set in 2018. Portland temperatures neared 100 for an entire week recently.

— The Associated Press

The Daily Sentinel (ISSN 1445-8962)
Printed editions published Wednesday thru Sunday, electronic editions published every morning at 734 S. Seventh Street, Grand Junction, CO 81501. Periodical postage paid at Grand Junction, CO.
Carrier home delivery prices: 13 weeks - \$65.00, 26 weeks - \$130.00, 52 weeks - \$260.00.
Weekend delivery packages: Wednesday thru Sunday - \$244.40, Friday thru Sunday - \$197.60, Saturday & Sunday - \$163.80, Sunday only - \$163.80.
Weekend “print only” delivery includes the following date in 2022: 11/24/2022. If you are an e-edition subscriber for 11/24/2022, you will not receive a printed paper. Single Copy: \$1.00 daily and \$2.00 Sunday.
Mail (USPS): \$30.00 per week, \$1,560 per year. *POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Daily Sentinel, 734 S. Seventh Street, Grand Junction, CO 81501.”

INFO MEETING SAT, AUG. 20th
TC JOHNSTON, AUCTIONEER
970-208-7346

CHESNICK REALTY LLC
Lori Chesnick
970-858-8238
LORI@CHESNICKREALTYLLC.COM

CHESNICK REALTY AND AUCTIONEER, TC JOHNSTON, WILL BE HOSTING AN OPEN HOUSE/ INFORMATION MEETING FOR AN UPCOMING AUCTION OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTY. ON SITE AT 1412 HWY 50, LOMA, COLORADO, 81524, ON AUGUST 20TH FROM 10 A.M. TO 12 P.M. PROPERTY IS 1.74 ACRES WITH 772 SQ. FT. SHOP/OFFICE. **All information regarding the property and the terms of the sale will be provided to everyone who attends the meeting.**



Garage Sale Ad Special

\$19 for the first 25 words, \$30 per extra word

Runs 3 days in The Daily Sentinel 1 Day in the Nickel and online!

Ad Deadline is Wednesday at 2pm

Call 970-242-1313

Place your ad anytime at **GJSentinel.com/PlaceAd** or email classified@gjsentinel.com

All contents copyright © 2022 The Daily Sentinel. All republication rights are reserved. Material in this publication may not be published, broadcast, rewritten for broadcast or publication or redistributed directly or indirectly in any medium.

Pick 3 Midday Sunday: **6, 9, 4** Evening Sunday: **4, 8, 5**
Cash 5 Sunday: **7, 20, 23, 24 and 32**
For information, go to www.coloradolottery.com.

CIRCULATION	ADVERTISING	NEWSROOM	Features and entertainment..... 256-4224
Subscription and delivery questions: 242-1919 or (800) 332-5833	Retail advertising..... 256-4289 Classified advertising..... 242-1313	Managing editor 256-4252 City desk..... 256-4226	Sports..... 256-4203 Commentary 256-4236

