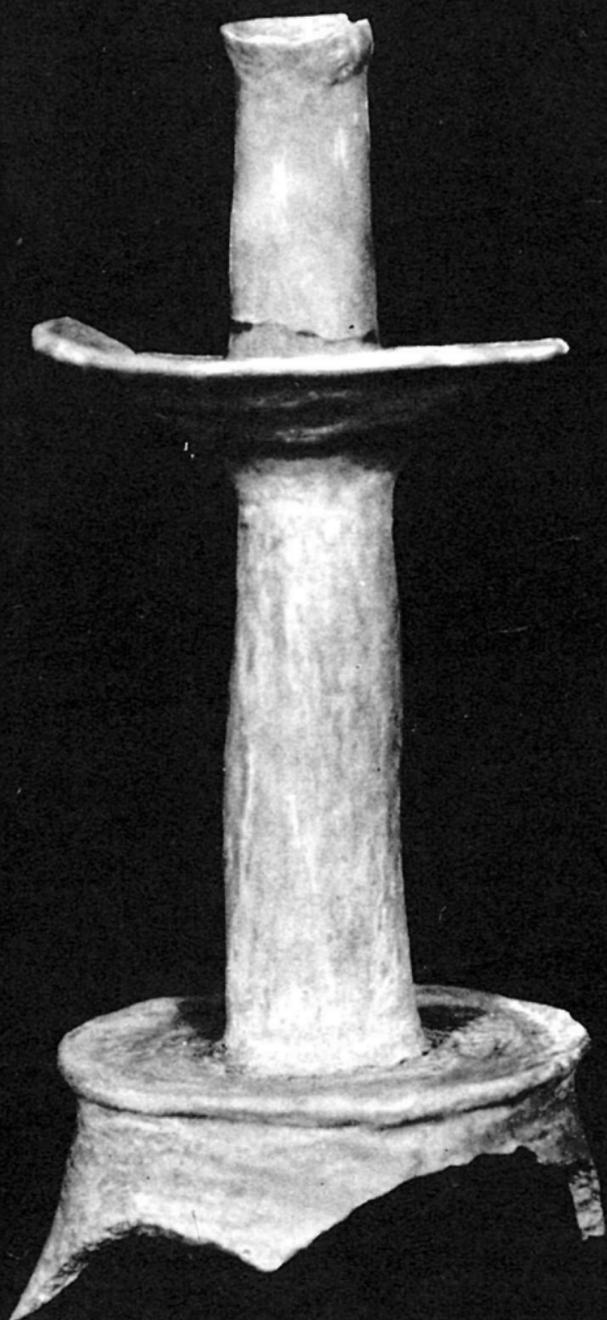


# Gran Quivira

NATIONAL MONUMENT



## GRAN QUIVIRA NATIONAL MONUMENT, NEW MEXICO

*Standing atop one of the east-west ridges of the Chupadera Mesa*

*in central New Mexico, its rectangular features jutting above the*

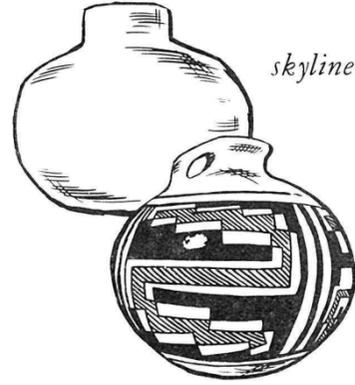
*skyline and marking it the work of man, is the long-abandoned 17th-century*

*Franciscan church, San Buenaventura. Next to it and also partly*

*silhouetted against the sky lies the Pueblo de las Humanas,*

*surrounding yet another Franciscan church, San Isidro.*

*These ruins are preserved in Gran Quivira National Monument.*



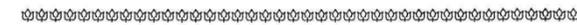
### THE EARLY PEOPLE

The Indians who occupied the territory from the vicinity of Gran Quivira southward to about the Mexican border belonged to a group known as the Mogollon (mug-ee-yown). Their pit houses, built partly above ground, date from A.D. 800; they are evidence of the earliest known occupation of these people in the Gran Quivira area.

#### Pit houses

The pit houses formed small villages, which might have contained two or three families. This suggests that their farming plots did not produce abundantly and that they relied upon game and wild plant food as the main supplement to their diet. Their pottery, a major clue to the identity of a prehistoric people, was an undecorated brownware.

For the Mogollon, the period from 1100 to 1400 was a time of great change and new ideas. During the 1100's,



The carved stone face and ceramic candleholder on the cover symbolize the religion of the people of Las Humanas pueblo and of the Franciscan missionaries of the 17th century.

pottery made from a light-gray clay and decorated with black designs was introduced to the Mogollon group from the Pueblo people to the west. Active trade relations with people in the Rio Grande valley of New Mexico and the later movement of large numbers of Pueblo people into the Galisteo basin to the north also had a pronounced influence upon their life.

It was during this period that black-on-white pottery became popular and the kiva, an underground ceremonial chamber, was adopted, indicating acquisition of new religious concepts.

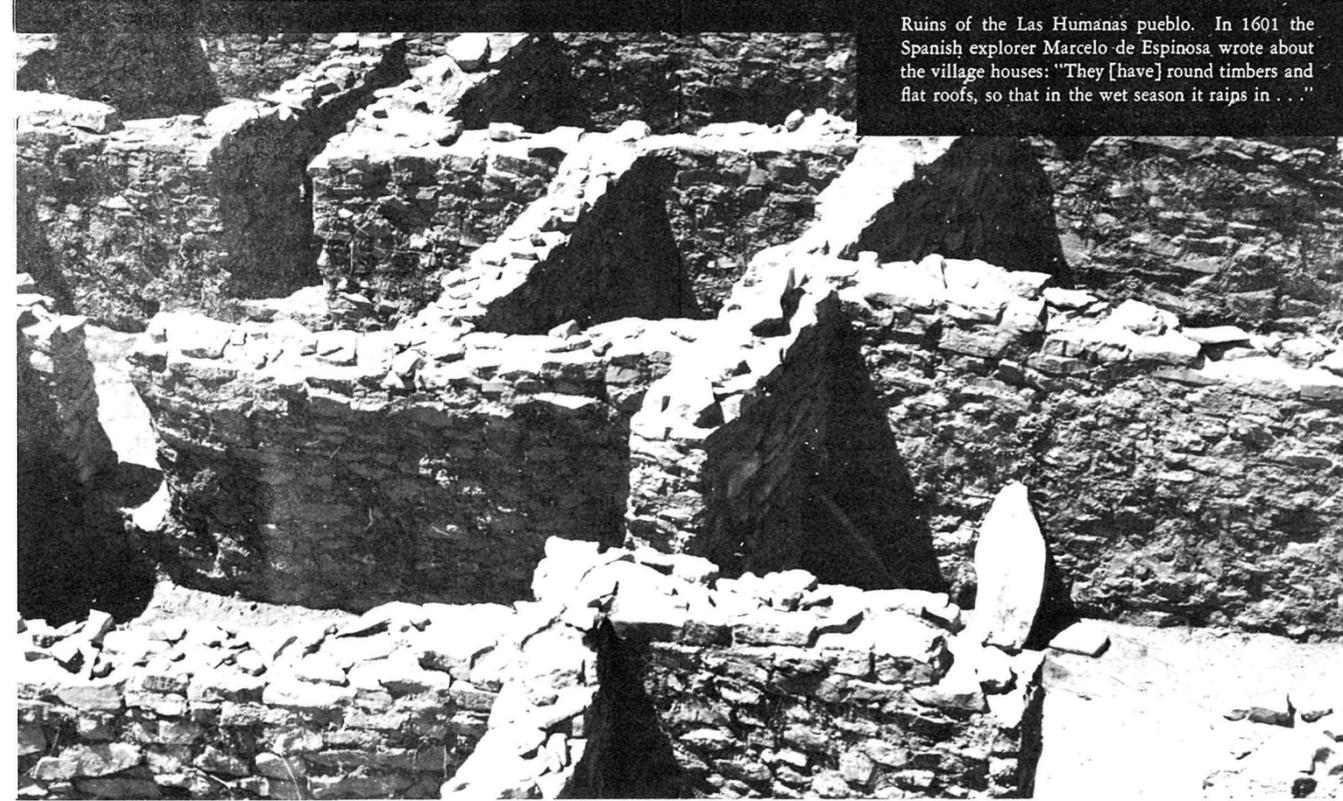
Building styles also changed—from the small family house and village arrangement of the early 1100's to the coursed-masonry community house of the 1300's which contained several families living side by side. Although the Mogollon adopted the idea of the coursed-masonry community house from the Pueblos, the overall building placement was more characteristic of the Mogollon in that it lacked the regular, planned appearance of a pueblo.

#### Community houses

The earliest Indian community house in the monument (located on the south slope of the ridge) was constructed



Archeologists recently reset the original pine beam over the entrance to San Buenaventura Mission.



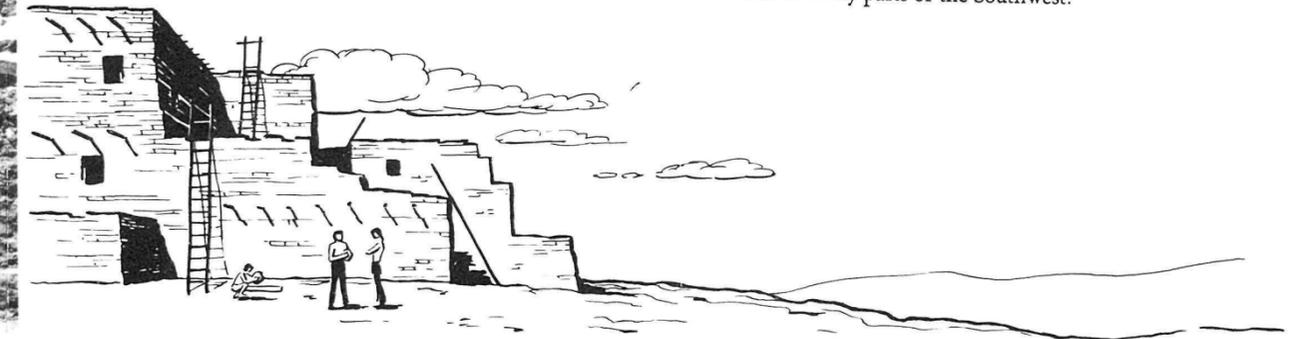
Ruins of the Las Humanas pueblo. In 1601 the Spanish explorer Marcelo de Espinosa wrote about the village houses: "They [have] round timbers and flat roofs, so that in the wet season it rains in . . ."

about A.D. 1300. It was a single-story rectangular coursed-masonry unit with a central plaza entered by a narrow passage at its eastern side. Later the house was abandoned, and larger one-storied and multistoried buildings were built on the ridge. Gray-blue limestone from the ridge and mud mortar were used in construction. By the 1600's this sombre gray pueblo had become the largest in the region.

This Mogollon village, later named the Pueblo de las Humanas by the Spanish, had a hunting-gathering-farming economy. In addition to the cultivation of corn, squash, and beans, the Indians hunted deer, pronghorn, and smaller creatures such as quail, rabbit, and rodents. They gathered the wild seed of the saltbush, the mature pods of the cholla and pricklypear cactuses and the roots, seeds, flowers, and tender stalks of the yucca. Yucca also provided material for sandals and baskets. The Mogollon people traded with the Plains Apache—corn for bison hides and meat.

Knives, scraping tools, arrow points, and drills were made from a variety of stones such as obsidian, chalcedony, and chert. Bone was shaped to form awls for basket-making and was used as fleshing tools for preparing hides. Dense hard stone was laboriously ground to form axes with which to cut the juniper logs for roof beams of the houses.

These people were excellent potters, coiling the clay in rows, one on top of the other, shaping and smoothing the pot in the process. On cooking pots you can still see the evidence of the coils and thumbnail imprints where they pressed the coils together, giving the pot a corrugated appearance. On other pots the coils were smoothed, a slip of different color clay was brushed on, and decorations, often of fine design, were applied.



Water was always a problem in this semiarid region. Wild plants and animals, the farm crops, and the people themselves were dependent upon the vagaries of summer storms and unpredictable water tables. Wells 15 to 25 feet deep were dug in the sandy valley about three-quarters of a mile west of the pueblo, and collecting basins were constructed by damming the arroyos. Springs were not plentiful, the shallow wells could often go dry, and the reservoirs fail to fill. With these rigors facing them, the people understandably sought to propitiate with ritual and ceremony the forces controlling nature.

Their religion was animistic: the belief that plants and animals, as well as men, had souls. They believed that the forces of nature—wind, rain, fertility of plants, reproduction of animals—could be controlled by the proper performance of rites long ago taught them by the spirits and handed down generation after generation.

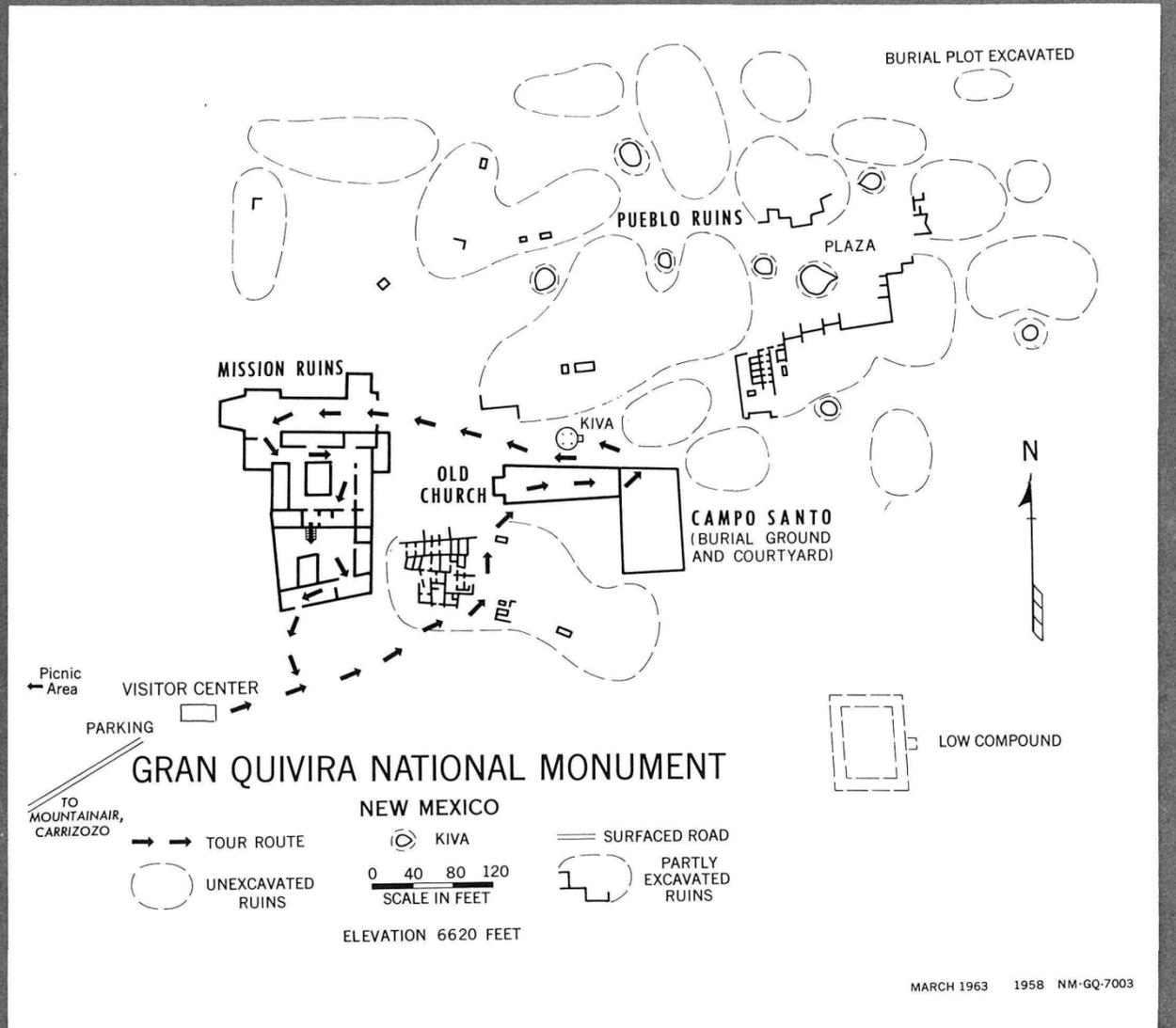
The entire way of life of these people—the planting and harvesting of crops, hunting, warfare, birth and death—was closely interwoven with religious beliefs and ritual performance. They sought harmony with nature.

Thus the Pueblo de las Humanas awaited the next phase of history: the entry of the Spanish conquistadors and the Franciscan padres.

### COMING OF THE SPANISH

By 1530, Spain had conquered and colonized the Caribbean and the region of Mexico City. The Spanish frontier in the New World had advanced to a line south of the present Mexico-United States border. Tales of vast wealth to the north circulated in Mexico City, and the spirit of riches through conquest prevailed.

The Rio Grande valley was the roadway for the Spanish, and they spread their influence and exploration from this base to many parts of the Southwest.



MARCH 1963 1958 NM-GQ-7003

**Conquest**

The first Spanish expedition to explore New Mexico, that of Coronado in 1540, set up army headquarters for 2 years in the vicinity of present-day Albuquerque. The main exploration continued from this point eastward into the Great Plains in search of the riches of the land of Quivira (now known to have been located on the Great Plains in central Kansas), but exploratory trips also were made south along the Rio Grande, some 40 miles west of the Pueblo de las Humanas.

The Rodriguez-Chamuscado Expedition of 1581 and the Espejo Expedition of 1583 explored parts of the Southwest, but neither party actually visited the Pueblo de las Humanas.

In 1598, Don Juan Oñate traveled up the valley. His charge by the Spanish crown: colonize New Mexico, convert the heathen Indian to the Holy Catholic Faith.

**Conversion**

With each expedition went Catholic missionaries whose goal was to Christianize the natives found in the newly explored areas. The Spanish crown sought to develop its colonies through Christianized natives inculcated with Spanish ideals. The agency for accomplishing this end in New Mexico was the Franciscan missionary. The padres visited pueblos, introduced Catholicism, and established missions. The mission, encompassing more than just the church, was an entire community: an industrial and agricultural school, farming and grazing lands, weaving rooms, tanneries, and the center of religious instruction. It sought to replace the economic, religious, and political way of life of the Indian with that of the Spanish.

In October 1598, Oñate set out on a reconnoitering journey. During this trip he visited the villages of the Humanas Indians and recorded three pueblos, one of which he reported as being large. This is the first known visit to the Pueblo de las Humanas (Gran Quivira).

Records of Spanish missionary activity at Gran Quivira are scarce. In 1626, it is first mentioned as a *visita* of the mission of San Gregorio de Abo, 20 miles northwest. The

next year, Fray Alonso de Benavides entered the Humanas pueblo on the Day of San Isidro. He later reported that in 1629 Father Letrado, who was assigned here for 2 years, built a very fine church dedicated to San Isidro. Between 1631 and 1659 the pueblo was again administered from the mission at Abo. In 1659, Father Diego Santander was assigned to the pueblo. He rededicated the mission to San Buenaventura and enlarged the church facilities. He left in 1662, and in all probability the mission once more became a *visita* of Abo. Father Paredes was assigned in 1666 and remained in charge until 1669. There are no records indicating that any priest served here between that time and the abandonment of the pueblo in the early 1670's.

A severe drought (1666-70), accompanied by famine, pestilence, and increasing Apache Indian raids on the village, decimated the population. Sometime between 1672 and 1675, the pueblo was abandoned, and the remaining Indians of the Pueblo de las Humanas moved to the Rio Grande valley in the vicinity of Socorro, joining a people who spoke the same language. A few of them continued to El Paso del Norte where, in 1680, they were joined by those from Socorro who had fled with the Spaniards from the Pueblo Revolt of that year.

What effect did the early Spanish have upon the Pueblo people? The most obvious was the change in material culture. New pottery forms and design elements were introduced. Wheat bread resulted in the introduction of the beehive oven, not known prior to Spanish times. Cattle, goats, and sheep, the latter providing wool for weaving, were made a part of the economy. An elective governor system was instituted with the intent of replacing the native religious council and priests, but without success.

Spanish religious influence is not easily identified. The supernatural beings of the Indians were not usually replaced; rather, Catholic saints were added to the beliefs. Cults containing both native and Catholic elements sprang up. The church became an added center of ceremony, sharing a place with the kiva and its attendant native religion. The program of daily life was changed to conform with church functions, and care for the destitute was undertaken.

**ABOUT YOUR VISIT**

From U.S. 60, you can reach the monument by turning south at Mountainair and driving 26 miles on N. Mex. 10. From U.S. 380, turn north at Carrizozo and drive 56 miles via U.S. 54 and N. Mex. 10 (unpaved for 39 miles). You can also reach the monument by turning off U.S. 380 at Bingham and driving north on N. Mex. 41, but you should use this road only during periods of good weather.

The visitor center, open all year from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., contains archeological and historical exhibits. You should visit it before taking the Mission Trail, for it will help you understand what you will see.

The self-guiding Mission Trail is a 20-minute walk through the ruins of the mission churches and the Indian pueblo.

A picnic area is available, but there is no campground. Meals and lodging can be obtained at nearby towns.

Help protect your monument. *Take nothing but pictures; leave nothing but footprints.*

**ADMINISTRATION**

GRAN QUIVIRA NATIONAL MONUMENT, established on November 1, 1909, and containing 611 acres, is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

The National Park System, of which this area is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and inspiration of its people.

A superintendent, whose address is Route 1, Mountainair, N. Mex. 87036, is in immediate charge of the monument.

**AMERICA'S NATURAL RESOURCES**

Created in 1849, the Department of the Interior—America's Department of Natural Resources—is concerned with the management, conservation, and development of the Nation's water, wildlife, mineral, forest, and park and recreational resources. It also has major responsibilities for Indian and territorial affairs.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department works to assure that nonrenewable resources are developed and used wisely, that park and recreational resources are conserved, and that renewable resources make their full contribution to the progress, prosperity, and security of the United States—now and in the future.

Reprint 1966

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1966-O-235-105

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**  
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

**Gran Quivira**  
**NATIONAL MONUMENT**

