

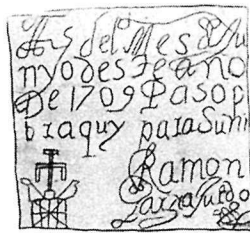


El Morro

NATIONAL MONUMENT

NEW MEXICO





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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OSCAR L. CHAPMAN, Secretary
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE • Conrad L. Wirth, Director



Important watering place on the trail to Cibola, where Indians, Spaniards, and Americans left their inscriptions on the sandstone cliff.

EL MORRO, OR INSCRIPTION ROCK, is a massive mesa-point of sandstone, which derives its name from the Spanish word "morro," meaning "headland" or "bluff." Rising some 200 feet above the valley floor, the rock forms a striking landmark. From its rugged summit, rain and melted snow drain into a large natural basin below, creating a constant, dependable supply of water. The route from Acoma to the Zuñi pueblos led directly past the mesa. It became a regular camping spot for the Spanish conquistadores and, later on, for American travelers to the West. In its sheltered coves they found protection from sun and storm and at the pool plenty of good water in a region where water was scarce.

Many of the travelers left a record of their passage by cutting inscriptions into the soft sandstone. Two years before the founding of Jamestown, and 15 years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, the first Spanish inscription was made by Don Juan de Oñate in April 1605.

On the very top of El Morro lie ruins of Zuñi Indian pueblos, abandoned long before the coming of the Spaniards. Broken pottery is strewn about. These ruins, as yet unexcavated, are covered with the growth of centuries, but here and there a bit of wall, still standing, speaks of the culture that once flourished here. Carved on the rock itself are also hundreds of petroglyphs left by these ancient people.

The inscriptions carved in stone at El Morro are the heritage of the modern Indian, Spain, Mexico, and the United States. As such, it symbolizes the basis upon which this Nation and those of Spanish America may meet upon common grounds of culture and history to illustrate the unity of the Western Hemisphere.

THE "SEVEN CITIES OF CIBOLA"

In the years following the conquest of Mexico, stories reached the Spaniards of seven golden cities far to the north, called Cibola. The actual basis for the rumor was simply the six villages of the Zuñi Indians, whose own words for themselves and their country today are words not unlike Cibola. The story of the seven cities was stimulated especially by the arrival in Mexico of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, in 1536, after 8 years of wandering westward from the gulf coast of Texas, during which he heard of the pueblos of New Mexico and especially of Cibola.

In 1539, a Franciscan, Fray Marcos de Niza, traveled north up the west coast of Mexico in search of Cibola, guided by Cabeza de Vaca's companion, the black slave Estevan. Estevan traveled far ahead of Fray Marcos and was killed by the Zuñis. Word of his death reached the friar somewhere in southern Arizona. Historians disagree as to whether Fray Marcos himself actually reached Cibola.

The following year, Fray Marcos accompanied the famous expedition north of Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, which on July 7, 1540, took Hawikuh, the first or southernmost of the six Zuñi pueblos (towns) and spent the rest of the summer there before going east to the Rio Grande, probably passing El Morro en route to Acoma.

The first post-Coronado expedition, that of Chamuscado and Rodríguez in 1581, came up the Rio Grande and then across to Zuñi by way of Acoma and, probably, El Morro. The expedition of 1583, headed by Antonio de Espejo and Fray Francisco Beltrán, also came from Acoma to Zuñi, certainly by way of El Morro, which is mentioned in the journal of Diego Pérez de Luxán, as "El Estanque del Peñol."

THE FOUNDING OF NEW MEXICO

In the summer of 1598, the expedition of Juan de Oñate came up the Rio Grande and founded, beside San Juan pueblo, the first actual Spanish settlement in New Mexico. Oñate immediately made rapid trips to all the New Mexico pueblos, going to the Zuñi and Hopi (Moqui) towns in the fall of 1598, and passing El Morro en route. It was at El Morro that Oñate, on the way back from Hopi and Zuñi, learned of the dramatic fight at Acoma in which 15 Spaniards were killed by the Indians.

In 1604, Oñate finally made the trip westward beyond the Hopi villages, which he had planned for 6 years, crossing western Arizona to the Colorado River and descending that stream to its mouth. On his way home, in the spring, he stopped at El Morro and carved on it the earliest known inscription: "Passed by here the Adelantado Don Juan de Oñate, from the discovery of the Sea of the South, the 16th of April of 1605." The "Sea of the South" was the Gulf of California.

THE MISSION PERIOD

In 1629, a reinforcement of the corps of friars made possible the extension of the missionary sphere to include on the east the Salinas pueblos, "Gran Quivira" (now a national monument), Abo, and Quarai, and on the west the Zuñi and Hopi pueblos. Establishment of Franciscan missions at Hawikuh and Halona (the surviving pueblo of Zuñi), in August 1629, is commemorated by a poem carved on El Morro in praise of the strength and valor of Governor Don Francisco Manuel de Silva Nieto, who alone made it possible to carry the faith to Zuñi, according to his statement.

Neither the Hopis nor the Zuñis took kindly to conversion. Within a few years the priest of Awatovi, the major Hopi mission, was poisoned; and the priest of Hawikuh and another friar on his way west from

Zuñi were killed and scalped. The Zuñis fled for refuge to the top of Towayalane (Corn Mesa).

Within a few months a punitive expedition came to Zuñi from Santa Fe and left this inscription on El Morro: "They passed on March 23, 1632, to the avenging of the death of Father Letrado.—Lujan."

In October 1672, there was another violent martyrdom at Hawikuh, when raiding Apaches sacked the church and brutally murdered Fray Pedro de Ayala, who had been assigned there only 2 months before.

REBELLION AND RECONQUEST

The final violence, the third martyrdom, occurred at Halona (Zuñi) and was one of a group of simultaneous killings. Spasmodic native resistance to the Spanish conquistadores culminated in a deep-laid plot by which, in August 1680, all the pueblos rose in revolt, killing priests and laymen at the pueblos. Fray Juan del Bal was killed at Zuñi, and the church was burned.

The first stage in the Spanish reconquest came in 1692, when Don Diego de Vargas, with a small force, visited all the pueblos and, without bloodshed, received their resubmission to the Spanish crown. Vargas followed the usual route from Acoma via El Morro to Zuñi, where the people were again atop Towayalane, and on to the Hopi villages; then

back via Zuñi to El Morro, but on leaving El Morro struck out directly southeastward for Socorro and El Paso. Perhaps it was just before taking this new route that Vargas carved on the rock a record of his passage and his reconquest of New Mexico.

Upon actual reoccupation of New Mexico after his initial expedition, Vargas encountered resistance among the pueblos, despite their supposed submission. For several years there were strife and trouble.

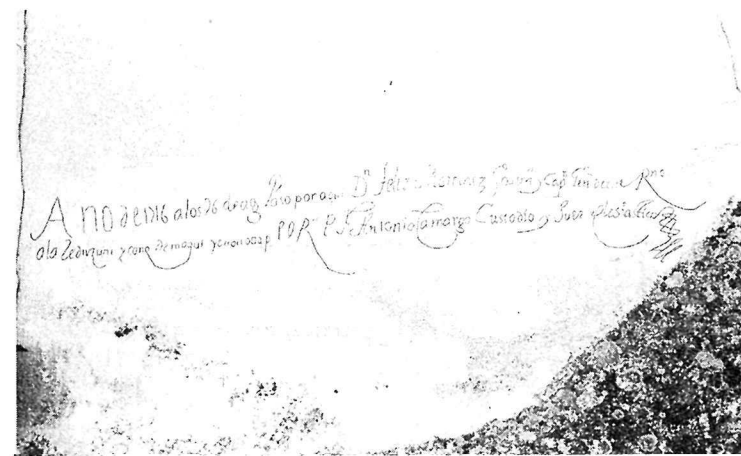
The last incident of the reconquest was the unsuccessful campaign of Governor Don Feliz Martinez against the Moqui (Hopi) villages in 1716. Don Feliz also left a message on El Morro as he followed the usual route, which he might have done well to erase on the way back, for he did not accomplish "the reduction and conquest of Moqui."

The eighteenth century was a relatively quiet period in Spanish New Mexico. Various travelers passed by El Morro and left their names, notably the Bishop of Durango on his way to Zuñi in 1737 on some ecclesiastical inspection in connection with his claim to authority over the New Mexico missions. The last Spanish inscription is dated 1774.

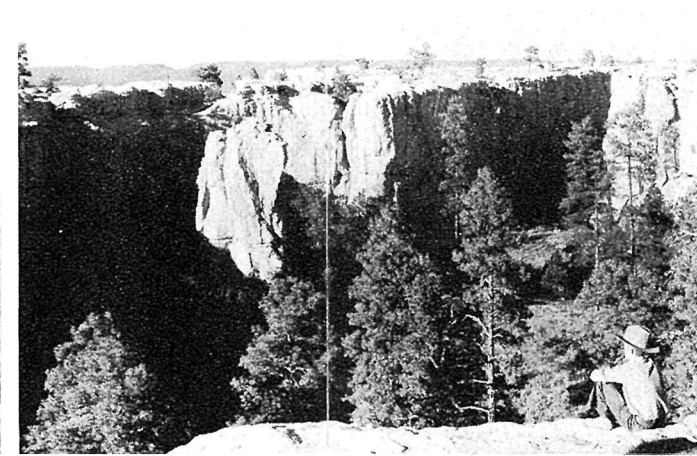
THE ANGLO-AMERICANS

Soon after the occupation of Santa Fe by the army of General Kearney in August 1846, American Army officers were traveling west

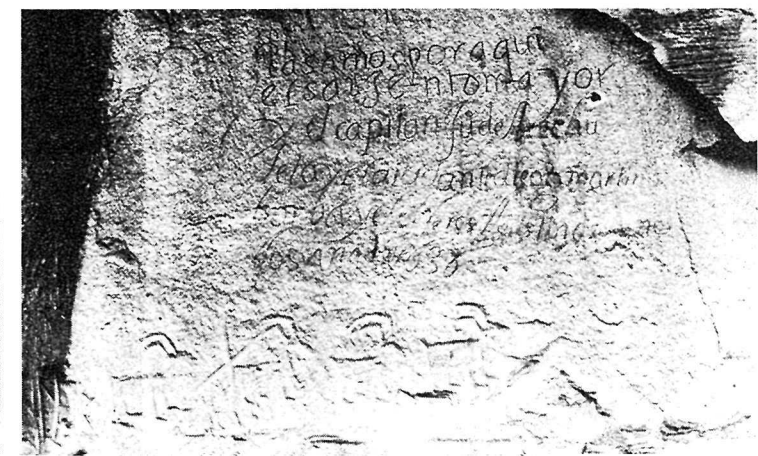
Inscription of Governor and Captain-General Martinez, 1716.



Box canyon within El Morro.



Archuleta inscription of 1636, with earlier Indian petroglyphs below.



in New Mexico. The first of them to visit El Morro was Lt. J. H. Simpson, accompanied by the artist R. H. Kern who copied the early inscriptions.

After Simpson's visit, many other names, including those of emigrants, traders, Indian agents, soldiers, surveyors, and settlers were added to the rock. One of special interest is that of Lt. E. F. Beale. It was Lieutenant Beale who commanded a caravan of camels, which had been imported as an experiment in transportation in the arid Southwest, in a journey from Texas to California in 1857. Beale's use of the route past El Morro popularized that trail, and emigrant trains began to use it. The first such train reached the area on July 7, 1858, and camped there overnight. On the rock appear many names carved by its members.

THE MONUMENT

El Morro National Monument, established by Presidential proclamation in 1906, is 53 miles by road southeast of Gallup, N. Mex., and 42 miles west of Grants, N. Mex. It contains 240 acres of federally owned land.

View southeast from the top of El Morro.



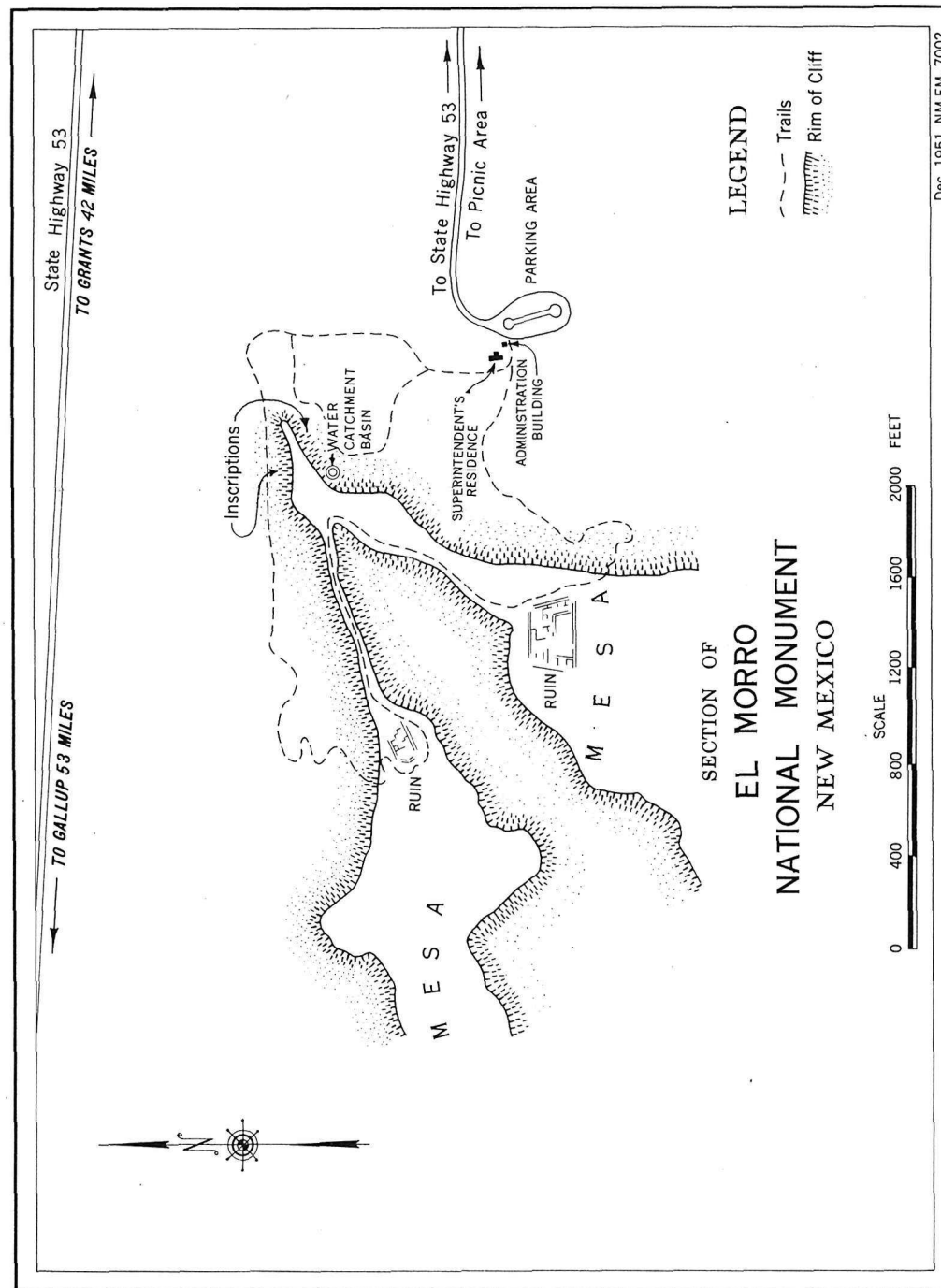
VISITOR FACILITIES

No accommodations or other tourist facilities are available at the monument, but visitors can make the trip from Gallup or Grants, take a guided trip around El Morro and return in less than a day. There is a nominal guide fee which is waived for members of the Armed Forces, Indians, educational groups, and children under 12 years of age.

ADMINISTRATION

The monument is administered by the National Park Service, of the United States Department of the Interior, with a superintendent in immediate charge. All communications concerning the monument should be addressed to the Superintendent, El Morro National Monument, El Morro, N. Mex.

The National Park System, of which El Morro National Monument is a unit, is dedicated to the conservation of America's scenic, scientific, and historic heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.



Cover: Inscription Rock from the east.



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