

A Story of New Mexico Told in 100 Buildings

HOW THE
LAND OF ENCHANTMENT
HAPPENED



CRUDEN BAY BOOKS

INTRODUCTION

Imagine a group of settlers arriving in an undeveloped location. First come shelters in which to live and then structures in which to work and shop. There are buildings for worship and education. As the community grows government buildings are required. With prosperity comes places in which to spend leisure time. And each step along the way builds a story unique to New Mexico.

That story is all around you in the work of those who came before you. In these pages you'll learn the explanations behind the quirks, the traditions and the secrets that make New Mexico uniquely New Mexico. How did Chaves County end up with the state's best Beaux Arts building? Solved. Where to find the largest collection of National Park Service "parkitecture"? Mystery solved. The building that received the most government money during the Great Depression? Identified. America's only school built as a bomb shelter? Revealed.

Roadside architecture...iconic art...Ernie Pyle...historic stages...Ben Hur...Carnegie libraries...The Mother Road...boomtowns...Pancho Villa...iron horses...Buffalo Soldiers...five and dimes...Harvey Houses...early aviation...Henry Trost...Confederate dreams...the atomic bomb...chiles...water...the golden age of motoring...the Civilian Conservation Corps...Billy the Kid...quarter horses...This book will have you telling stories like a native in no time.

Almost all of the selections within are open to the public, or at least visible from public spaces. So, if you haven't seen these landmarks in person, fire up your GPS and get out and see the story of the Land of Enchantment standing in plain sight on New Mexico streets!

**A STORY OF NEW MEXICO TOLD IN 100 BUILDINGS...
HOW THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT HAPPENED**

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Puye Cliff Dwellings

Española

900s



When the Pueblo people first arrived on the Pajarito Plateau to hunt game and farm they settled atop the mesa in a communal dwelling constructed around a central plaza. But when the sheer cliffs of volcanic tuff were found to be easily excavated with stone tools individual living spaces began to be carved out of the base of the mesa. The Pajarito Plateau had its first suburbs. Over the centuries the Puye Cliff Dwellings expanded to two levels more than one mile long. Around 1580 the settlement was abandoned in favor of the Rio Grande Valley. The pueblo was the first Edgar Lee Hewett systematically excavated after the Illinois anthropologist came to New Mexico to help his wife's tuberculosis. Hewett's work led to the passage of the Congressional Antiquities Act in 1906 that severely restricted the activities of "pot hunters" purging artifacts from New Mexico and elsewhere.

Chetro Ketl

Chaco Canyon

900s



The Chacoan Culture was almost a transitory blip in the history of the Puebloan peoples - "only" about 300 years. But in that time they erected buildings - thanks to innovative masonry techniques - larger than any that would grace New Mexico until the 1800s. Across nine miles of high-desert canyon floor some 14 "great houses" were constructed with hundreds of rooms. Unlike adobe houses that would be added on to as time wore on these pieces of public architecture were planned from the start - even if completion was decades away. Their siting was carefully selected along solar and lunar patterns with lines of sight built in between houses. A system of roads connected the houses within Chaco Canyon and beyond. Despite the clues in more than 2,000 archeological sites in what is now a National Historic Park the Chacoan people remain mysterious. Were they farming in this marginal landscape or were they temporary visitors using the buildings for ceremonial and commercial purposes? Whether the climate harshened and ruined crops or if it was just time to go the Chacoan Culture had migrated away from the region by the 1200s.

Taos Pueblo

Taos
1000



The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) sums up the significance of the Taos Pueblo in its designation of the community along a small tributary of the Rio Grande River as a World Heritage Site this way: "Taos Pueblo is a remarkable example of a traditional type of architectural ensemble from the pre-Hispanic period of the Americas unique to this region and one which, because of the living culture of its community, has successfully retained most of its traditional forms up to the present day." The collection of multi-story adobe buildings - the North and South houses are five levels - is the largest of the Pueblo Indian settlements that still exist. Electricity and piped water remain forbidden within the walled area of the Pueblo - the stream that sustains the inhabitants flows from the Sacred Blue Lake. Of the eleven World Heritage Sites in the United States, three, including Taos Pueblo, are in New Mexico.

Acoma Pueblo

Casa Blanca
1100



While the pueblo of the Acoma Indians is 1000 years old, tribal traditions say occupation in the village goes back another 1000 years. Whatever the exact dates Ancient Sky City can safely put in a claim to being the oldest continuously inhabited community in the United States. The pueblo was sited atop a 357-foot mesa with sheer cliffs. Since access was available only by steps hand-cut into the sandstone the defensive position of Sky City was impregnable - at least until Spanish troops arrived in 1599 with a small cannon and decimated the community. In 1629 the Spaniards set about building the San Estévan del Rey Mission as a "gesture of peace," although the Acoma people did all the construction. Some 20,000 tons of earth, stone, and Ponderosa pine were hauled up the slopes of the mesa for the new church. The Acoma continue to live in the adobe buildings of the Pueblo, although the coming of the railroads and a vehicle road blasted into the rock mesa have eroded the isolation that was the hallmark of Acoma culture for so many centuries.

Bandelier National Monument

Bandelier

1150



An eruption of the Valles Caldera a million-plus years ago left much of the surrounding area smothered in volcanic ash. When the first inhabitants drifted into the Jemez Mountains some 100 centuries ago they found it easy to carve out temporary dwellings from the soft tuff. A thousand years ago when the Anasazi people began to cultivate a more permanent presence they used the underlying sandstones and limestones to form building bricks. Bandelier is not named for any of these original inhabitants but for a Swiss-born archaeologist who helped pioneer modern study of the indigenous cultures of Mexico and the American Southwest. When Adolph Bandelier first set eyes on the pueblo homes, cliff dwellings, and kivas of Frijoles Canyon in 1880 he was said to blurt out, "It is the grandest thing I ever saw."

Gila Cliff Dwellings

Silver City

1276



Henry Ailman did his part to promote the civic well-being of Silver City after he sold his share of the Naiad Queen Silver Mine in Georgetown for \$160,000. He opened a store in town and tried to start a bank. From the roof of his handsome Italianate villa - now the headquarters of the Silver City Museum - he kept an eye out for Apache attacks. But he couldn't abide jury duty. To avoid serving in judgement of his fellow man Ailman drummed up a prospecting trip on the Gila River in 1878. It was there he discovered the remote caves once occupied by the ancient Mogollon culture. The rooms were large enough for about a dozen families who could gather food and hunt in the surrounding canyons.

The Plaza

Santa Fe

1610



This city-square has been the center of Santa Fe commercial and social life since 1610. The original Plaza was a walled fort containing residences, a chapel and the Governor's palace. The walls eventually came down and the open space was framed with adobe buildings seen today. Beginning in 1821 the Plaza was the final destination for travelers on the 800-mile Santa Fe Trail, America's most important trade route into the Southwest. The central obelisk was erected in 1868 as a remembrance to men lost in "battles with Indians in the Territory of New Mexico."

Palace of the Governors

Santa Fe

1610



One of America's architectural treasures, this low-slung building was constructed 400 years ago as the fortress of the royal presidio of Santa Fe and is the oldest public building in the continental United States. The Palace originally served as the seat of government of the Spanish colony and over two centuries later when New Mexico was annexed by the United States, the Palace became the first Territorial capitol. For much of the past 100 years it has done duty as the state history museum. The current Palace of Governors is the result of many re-workings, some of which began in the 1600s. Today's building is the representation of a restoration in 1913 based on the interpretation of Spanish Colonial architecture from that time.

San Miguel Chapel

Santa Fe

1620



This is America's oldest house of worship. The first written record of the mission appears in 1628 but oral tradition places its construction a decade or so earlier. The builders were Tlaxcalan Indians who had befriended the Spanish. The building was destroyed during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 but was put back in service in 1710 to serve as a chapel for Spanish soldiers. Hidden inside additions and numerous repairs, the original adobe walls still stand largely intact. For a time, San Miguel also claimed to have the country's oldest bell, a 780-pound copper casting dating back to 1356. Dubious historians were finally rewarded when the date was fixed as 1856.

Salinas Pueblo Missions

Mountainair

1620s



The large pueblos of the Salinas Valley - housing several thousand people - became magnets for Spanish missionary work in the early 17th century. Occupation of this valley may date back seven hundred years before that when the Pueblo Indians had come to dominate the trade routes from their impressive adobe structures. The San Gregorio de Abó Church, constructed with European-style buttresses that permitted tall, thin red sandstone walls was completed by 1629. The nearby Quarai Mission designed in the shape of a Latin cross was ready by 1632. The Gran Quivira, built near the largest of the Pueblo villages, is today the largest ruin of any Christian temple in the country; it was designated a national monument in 1909. The missions operated for half a century until drought and Apache raids led to their abandonment. Today the Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument that oversees the trio's remains tells the story of the first encounters of European and Pueblo cultures in New Mexico.

Zuni Pueblo

Zuni
1629



New Mexico is home to 19 active pueblos; Zuni is the largest with 700 square miles. Zuni is a Spanish name, the peoples that have occupied this region for 1,300 years are the A'shiwi. After contact - and conquest - by the Spaniard Francisco Vázquez de Coronado in 1540 the Zuni population began a steady decline until it had dropped by more than half, to 1,700, by the 1800s. But today the numbers are around 10,000 and almost all Zunis live in the Pueblo. Our Lady of Guadalupe mission church dates to 1629 when Franciscan priests arrived with dreams of new Christian converts.

El Rancho de las Golondrinas

Santa Fe
1702



The Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, The Royal Road of the Interior, was the northernmost of four such roads constructed by the Spanish to funnel gold and silver from distant mines to Mexico City. Begun in the late 1500s, the road would eventually stretch nearly 1,600 miles to its terminus in Santa Fe. Slowly haciendas and ranches were established along the Camino Real as it evolved into a true commercial lifeline. One such oasis was El Rancho de las Golondrinas, carved out of 200 acres of the valley of La Ciénega in the very early 1700s. The ranch's

sophisticated acequia system of irrigation kept the fields fertile and Golondrinas became an official paraje - resting place - for sojourners along the Camino Real. The coming of the railroads in the 1880s would end the prominence of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro after nearly 300 years. The 400 some miles through present-day New Mexico have been declared a National Historic Trail. For the past half-century El Rancho de las Golondrinas has functioned as a living history museum, demonstrating the cultural experience of the Camino Real.

Mission Church

Pecos

1707

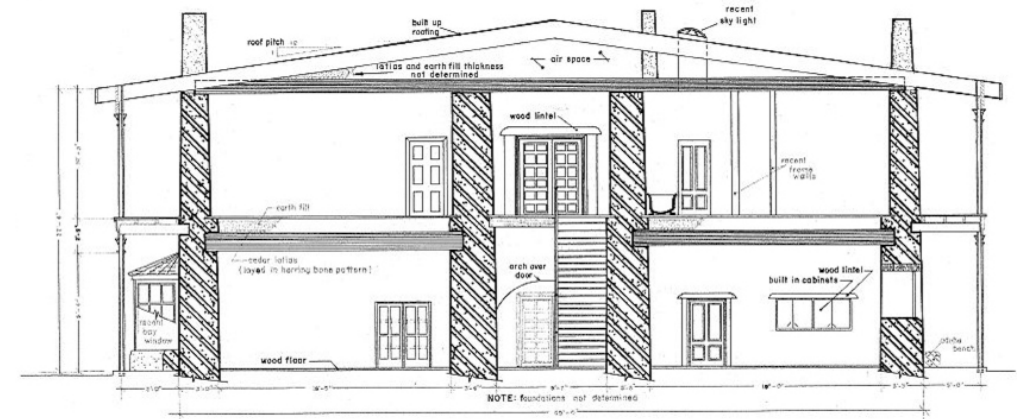


As he searched for the mythical Seven Cities of Gold in 1540 Francisco Vasquez de Coronado found something new and different at the Pecos Pueblo - welcoming gifts and singing. He naturally was inclined to believe stories of a rich wonder world far to the east, deep into modern-day Kansas. Coronado would eventually learn it was only a ruse to lure the Europeans into the barren lands and an expected death. Spaniard plans for Pecos, considered the largest and most powerful of New Mexico pueblos, then centered on religious conversion and land colonization. A mission church was completed outside the walls of the Pecos village in 1625. After it was destroyed in the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 a more modest church was erected on the foundations; the ruins still stand in the Pecos National Historical Park.

Los Luceros

Alcalde

1712



Los Luceros could easily be a handy cheat sheet for the New Mexico story: ancient peoples left one of the state's largest concentrations of petroglyphs dating back 10,000 years nearby; the fertile lands washed by the Rio Grande River fostered a Pueblo agricultural presence; it was a stop on the El Camino Real when part of a Spanish land grant; the Territorial hacienda was multi-functional, including a stint as a courthouse; and finally, the property attracted the attention of the wealthy Eastern elite. That East Coast patrician was Mary Cabot Wheelwright, born into Boston shipping wealth. It was not until her parents died when she was almost 40 that Mary felt comfortable enough to pursue her own interests - which meant New Mexico. Los Luceros is interpreted as an historic site during the time Wheelwright spent here between 1923 and 1958. She worked tirelessly to preserve the cultural legacy of her adopted state and founded the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian. The handsome hacienda grew from a modest four-room structure into a sprawling 24-room complex. It was the second floor that was used as a courtroom; if it was necessary to mete out justice the condemned was simply taken downstairs and directed to one of the cottonwood trees in the yard.

San José de Gracia Church

Las Trampas
1760



The San José de Gracia Church stands out as one of the adobe churches that has been least fiddled with in the decades since its arrival. Las Trampas was founded in 1751 by twelve Spanish and detribalized Native American families on the High Road between Santa Fe and Taos deep in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. The purpose of the settlement was defense against Indian attack. Las Trampas had grown to 63 families by the time the church, with 34-foot high walls, was completed in 1776. A few invasions came but not many other visitors to the town. So aside from a few roof repairs the 250-year old San José de Gracia Church carries on as one of the best living examples of church architecture in the Spanish Colonial era.

San Felipe de Neri Church

Albuquerque
1793



Francisco Cuervo y Valdés established Albuquerque in 1706 as a typical Spanish villa built around a plaza ringed with houses and functional buildings. One of the buildings was the San Felipe de Neri Church run by Franciscan missionaries. That church building collapsed in the 1790s and was replaced by the current sanctuary with sturdy adobe walls and a cruciform design. The arrival of the railroad in 1880 turned Albuquerque into much more than just another Spanish-founded town. But that line ran two miles from the original plaza. After a brief rivalry "New Albuquerque" became *the* Albuquerque. Eventually "Old Town" was annexed to the city in 1949. By that time only San Felipe de Neri Church could be documented as having been a part of the Spanish colonial era.

Blumenschein House

Taos
1797?



Growing up in Dayton, Ohio Ernest Blumenschein plotted out a life as a musician like his father, the director of the Dayton Philharmonic. But an illustration course at the Cincinnati Art Academy caused him to swap his violin bow for brushes and paints. Studying in Paris and working in New York City, Blumenschein kept hearing tales of the amazing light and landscapes of the desert Southwest. He wangled an assignment to the region in 1898 and upon returning to the East the excited 24-year old quickly convinced fellow illustrator Bert Phillips to join him on a painting trip to Mexico. A rough road outside of Taos shredded the wheel on their buggy. It took three days to repair but by that time the artists were convinced they needed to travel no further. They spent the remaining two months of their sketching trip in the Taos Valley and the Taos art colony was born. Blumenschein began summering in Taos in 1910 and by 1915 enough fellow artists had arrived to form the Taos Society of Artists. Blumenschein purchased the house in 1919 and made additions to the original core over the next 40 years; after his death in 1960 it quickly became a National Historic Landmark.

El Santuario de Chimayó

Chimayo
1816



The hills around the Santa Cruz River were a popular healing sanctuary for Pueblo Indians who believed helpful spirits resided in the area's hot springs. When the springs dried up the soil left behind was considered to have retained its powerful healing properties. Around 1810 a local man observed light emanating from one of the hills and when he went to investigate the source he discovered a crucifix with a likeness of Jesus. Believers were said to have constructed a small adobe chapel on the site to honor the crucifix. Today the modest church has evolved into an important Catholic pilgrimage center. Tens of thousands come each year - many on foot - to avail themselves of the miraculous "holy dirt" that is stored in a tiny round pit inside El Santuario de Chimayó. So many pilgrims rub the dirt on themselves or carry it away that the keepers of the faith are said to haul 25 tons of soil each year from the surrounding hillsides to keep the reservoir filled.

Kit Carson House

Taos
1825



Christopher Houston Carson was one of the first figures of the American frontier to emerge in the national consciousness for his exploits as a fur trapper, military officer, and wilderness guide. Born in 1809, the same year as Abraham Lincoln, Carson was apprenticed to a saddler in Missouri before lighting out on his own along the Santa Fe Trail at the age of 16. When he reached the end of the line he settled in Taos. For the next 20 years Carson's adventures were chronicled in newspapers and government reports. Biographies were written and Carson began being featured in the popular dime novels of the day - he would appear in more than 70 such works, some of which may have even contained a grain of truth. Carson returned to Taos in 1848 with the aim of starting a quiet life as a sheep rancher but it didn't take. He would not come for good to the place he considered home until his body was brought back from Colorado after his death in 1868. The adobe house Carson bought in 1843 and served as his home base lives on as a museum.

Turley Mill Ruins

Taos
1830



Shortly after the Mexican-American War was officially declared on May 13, 1846 the United States launched its New Mexico campaign from Fort Leavenworth in Kansas. Santa Fe Governor Manuel Armijo chose not to defend the city and surrendered New Mexico Territory without a fight. U.S. Army General Stephen Kearny set up a civilian government and took the bulk of his troops to California. Not all the Mexicans were down with their governor's actions with many fearing the new rulers would not honor their land rights. Insurrection simmered until January 19, 1847 when Mexican and Pueblo rebels killed Governor Charles Bent and several other appointed government officials. A force of some 500 then descended on the business establishment of Simeon Turley, a childhood friend of Kit Carson, about ten miles north of Taos. In addition to a grist mill and supply store Turley cranked out a crowd-pleasing 188-proof whiskey he called "Taos Lightning" spiced with chiles, tobacco, and a pinch of gunpowder. Turley was popular with the locals but he and his operation fell victim to mob violence in what became known as the Taos Revolt. The rebellion was quickly squelched by the United States Army but there would continue to be skirmishes into the summer of 1847 before open warfare in New Mexico would finally end.

U.S. Courthouse

Santa Fe

1854



Formerly designated simply as the United States Courthouse, it was renamed for the late District Judge Santiago E. Campos in 2004. The Greek Revival building, originally intended to be the New Mexico capitol, was constructed in two stages; the first in 1853-1854 and the second in 1888-1889. The Greek Revival style of the original design with prominent pediment and porticos is characteristic of the work of Ammi B. Young, Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. However, other elements of the design including the roof and second-story window treatments have a character more reminiscent of the Renaissance Revival architectural style of the late 1880s. To the north of the original building is a 1929-30 addition. The obelisk out front honors the legendary frontiersman and occasional Taos resident Christopher "Kit" Carson.

Pigeon's Ranch

Glorieta

1857



Alexander Vallé built his Rancho de la Glorieta in a tight canyon to raise sheep. A Missourian with French roots Vallé also used the Anglicized name "Pigeon" while expanding his property into a popular travel stop on the Santa Fe Trail that ran right through his ranch complex. He eventually counted 23 buildings around his rambling hacienda. Pigeon's Ranch was never busier than during the days March 26-28, 1862 when Confederate troops from Texas made their deepest incursion into the West. Federal troops, mostly Colorado volunteers, were outnumbered in their defensive position at Pigeon's Ranch until Major J.M. Chivington led a guerilla attack over the mountains and swept around the Confederate flank to destroy a vital supply train and force the rebel retreat. With that maneuver the Battle of Glorieta Pass earned the right to hang the banner of "The Gettysburg of the West." Pigeon's Ranch had served as a field hospital during the brunt of the fighting. Deterioration of the property began with Vallé's death in the 1870s and accelerated when the railroad did not route through Glorieta Pass. But when Route 66 arrived Thomas Greer repurposed the ranch as a tourist trap. The hacienda became a "Spanish fort" and the water well was billed as the "Oldest in the U.S.A." Greer and his souvenir shop died in the 1960s and the remaining bit of the original adobe hacienda became Pigeon's Ranch once again as part of the Pecos National Historical Park.

El Zaguán

Santa Fe
1857



This mid-1800s building on Canyon Road is one of Santa Fe's best examples of adobe architecture with a Territorial-style brick parapet above the south elevation. The house is known by the long hallway, or zaguán, that opens into various rooms behind the paneled wood gate in the adobe wall. The property was purchased in 1816 by Juan Ignacio Moya but first developed by James L. Johnson, a Maryland man who came to Santa Fe in 1857 as a trader. Johnson grew rich peddling his wares on the Santa Fe Trail until the coming of the railroad in the 1880s. Johnson family members stayed until 1926 at a time when the rents on Canyon Road were the lowest in town, little more than a dirt path down which burros hauled firewood to be sold on the street corners of downtown Santa Fe. Canyon Road would not be paved until 1964. Today the half-mile long road boasts more than 100 art galleries and consistently ranks in the top three markets in America for art sales. Meanwhile the pioneering villa did various duty as a school and a hotel and now houses resident artists. The property is renowned for its interior heritage garden that dates to Johnson's time.

Fort Bayard

Santa Clara
1866



The United States Army built 16 frontier forts in the New Mexico Territory and Fort Bayard, commissioned in 1866 in the heart of Apache country, was among the most perilous. The post began as an encampment of Company B of the 125th U.S. Colored Infantry, part of the regiment that came to be known as Buffalo Soldiers. As Fort Bayard grew the soldiers did not lack for action - Corporal Clinton Greaves of the fabled 9th Cavalry Black regiment was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for extricating his men from an Apache ambush on January 24, 1877. The fort remained active until 1899 but instead of being left to disintegrate in abandonment like many of its cousins the Army converted the garrison into its first tuberculosis treatment center which later became a Veterans Administration hospital. Fort Bayard's most recent assignment has been as a long-term nursing facility. Nothing remains of the frontier fort's original appearance save for its graveyard, one of only two national cemeteries in New Mexico.

Courthouse

Lincoln

1874



Lawrence Murphy was an immigrant from Ireland who found sustenance in the United States Army before finding his way to the New Mexico Territory in 1861. Murphy finagled the military contract to supply the Apache Reservation. As a side hustle he sold land he didn't own to new settlers, instigating his departure from Fort Stanton. He started L.G. Murphy & Company which he and partner James Dolan ran out of this two-story stucco building they called the "Big House." When Englishman John Tunstall opened a competing store in town Murphy hired gunmen to intimidate his new rival. Tunstall's eventual assassination detonated the so-called Lincoln County War that included a local henchman named Henry McCarty, better known in Western lore as Billy the Kid. When Murphy died of cancer and his company went bankrupt the county bought the building for use as a courthouse in 1880. After being tried and convicted of murder McCarty broke out of the second story jail and executed deputies James Bell and Bob Olinger. The courthouse experienced quieter days after that until it was replaced in 1913. After a stretch of abandonment the adobe building was restored for use as a museum beginning in 1939.

Raton Tunnel

Raton

1879



As the highest point on the fabled Santa Fe Trail - 7,834 feet - the Raton Pass has been celebrated in song and in the movies. The pass, which held the gateway for travelers into New Mexico and ultimately California, has been designated a National Historic Landmark. In the 1870s the pass was owned by Richens "Uncle Dick" Wooton who erected a tollgate and hotel along the trail. Two railroads were competing for the one route into New Mexico, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe (AT&SF) and the Denver & Rio Grande which had both extended track to Trinidad, Colorado. Buoyed by a collection of hired guns, the AT&SF won the "Colorado Railroad War" and inked a deal with Wooton to use the pass. The next battle for the Santa Fe was with the mountainous terrain - the line over the pass required numerous switchbacks with sharp curves and torturous 6% grades. A 2,041-foot tunnel was completed in 1879 but the climb through Raton Pass was still the steepest mainline in the West. Two powerful engines were required to conquer the ascent until the Santa Fe doubletracked the line and constructed a second tunnel in 1909.

Watrous House

Watrous
1879



The Santa Fe Trail, pioneered by William Becknell in 1821, proved to be a critical route in opening the American West before it was displaced by the railroad in 1880. By linking the Missouri River with Santa Fe over the course of 900 miles Americans had access to Mexican and southwestern markets via the El Camino Real. In southwest Kansas the Santa Fe Trail split in two - the Mountain Route swung north and the Cimarron Route maintained a more direct path. Shorter yes, but with the promise of only one fresh water source - the Cimarron River. The two routes re-joined at Watrous where travelers were re-introduced to civilization before the final push into Santa Fe. The community was abandoned when the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway established operations east of the trail junction. Some twenty surviving buildings of the frontier settlement remain, including the house and store of Samuel Watrous that survive as stand-out representations of northern New Mexico Territorial Style architecture.

Santa Fe Depot

Santa Fe
1880



The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) was chartered in 1859 and grew into one of America's great railroads, most commonly known simply as "The Santa Fe." Yet as the tracks approached the New Mexico territorial capital civil engineers thought it best to send the line south of the railroad namesake rather than tackle the mountainous terrain. The ultimate destination in 1880 turned out to be Albuquerque and a year later the AT&SF linked with the Southern Pacific at Deming to give the United States its second transcontinental rail route. A short spur branch from Lamy - 18 miles distant - had to be constructed to tie the bypassed city into the main line. The Santa Fe Depot remained busy until the coming of the Interstate Highway System that did not go around the capital. Today the revamped Mission Revival-styled station still does duty for a commuter line and tourist railroad.

Plaza Hotel

Las Vegas

1882



"Without exception, there was no town which harbored a more disreputable gang of desperadoes, and outlaws than did Las Vegas." That was historian Ralph Emerson Twitchell talking. He wasn't speaking about Las Vegas in Nevada in the 1900s, he was describing Las Vegas in New Mexico in the 1800s. When the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad built into town in 1879 Las Vegas was just about the biggest town

between Independence, Missouri and San Francisco. Doc Holliday was still thinking he was a dentist in town; he would soon be leaving ahead of a lynch mob. Don Benigno Romero prodded his fellow businessmen into ponying up \$25,000 for a first-rate hotel on the town plaza to help dignify the town. With its 13-bay Italianate facade and distinguished broken pediment on the roofline the Plaza Hotel got to be known as "The Belle of the Southwest." Teddy Roosevelt recruited 21 volunteers for his Rough Rider force from Las Vegas in the Spanish-American War in 1898 and the unit's first reunion was held the following year at The Plaza. Like many New Mexico buildings with "character," the hotel has racked up an impressive resume of Hollywood credits. Silent film cowboy hero Tom Mix used The Plaza as a frequent set piece and a century later the Coen brothers used it for several scenes in *No Country for Old Men*, winner of four Oscars.

Montezuma Castle

Montezuma

1885



One of the first things the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway did to encourage ridership was to build a six-mile spur line in 1881 to the "Las Vegas Hot Springs," where the railroad constructed a luxury hotel. It was the first building in New Mexico to feature electric lighting. The hotel burned down and so did its replacement. Chicago architects John Wellborn Root and Daniel Burnham who pioneered the modern skyscraper had been retained to design the second hotel and they were brought back for effort number three. Burnham and Root delivered an elephantine Queen Anne design with turrets, arches, and broad gables. It was fortunate the architects knew their way around large buildings as the final product featured 400 rooms in 90,000 square feet. The Castle's days as a hotel were relatively few, ending in 1903. Since then it has done duty as a YMCA, a college, and a seminary. The recipient of an award-winning restoration, the Castle is now part of a global network of schools known as the United World Colleges.

Holland General Store

Mogollon

1885



Silver City is one of New Mexico's jewels, named for a treasured natural resource of the state. But most of those riches originated in Mogollon, named for a Spanish provincial governor from the 1700s. It is now a ghost town. James Cooney made the first gold strike in a remote area of the Apache territory of the Gila Mountains

while still an Army sergeant at Fort Bayard. He waited until he mustered out of the military in 1876 to work the claim. It spoke to the profitability of the Little Fannie mine that Mogollon grew large enough to even become a ghost town. There were Apache raids - Cooney was killed in one in 1880. There was crippling Black Lung dust in the hard rock mines. There were devastating floods - three in the 1890s alone - and fires were always bringing down the town's wood buildings. It required the stage 15 hours to cover the 80 miles to Silver City and the terrain was so remote that robberies were just about built into the schedule. Still, Mogollon could boast a population in the thousands in its heyday. There were five saloons, a theater, two hotels, and competing brothels. This two-story adobe building was raised in 1885 by Frank Lauderbaugh and operated as one of Mogollon's four general stores. Its last owner was a Philadelphia barber named James Holland who bought the place in 1914. Holland stayed until 1948 just before the Little Fannie closed and Mogollon settled into its fate as another of New Mexico's abandoned mining towns.

Lew Wallace Building

Santa Fe

1887



This government building began life as a dormitory for St. Michael's School in 1887. The boys' school was started three decades earlier by four members of the Christian Brothers order. It carries the name of Lewis Wallace, an Indiana native who distinguished himself in the field during the Mexican War and the Civil War, rising to the rank of major general. The 51-year old lawyer was called from his practice in Crawfordville, Indiana to become Governor of the Territory of New Mexico from 1878 until 1881. During that time while staying in the Palace of Governors he finished his historical adventure novel *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*, that became one of the best-selling books in American history. After his service in New Mexico, Wallace was appointed as United States Minister to the Ottoman Empire from 1881 to 1885 before returning to live out his life in Indiana.

Embudo Stream Gaging Station

Embudo

1888



The history of the modern American West can not be untangled from the story of water management. John Wesley Powell, who saw the power of hydrology close up with explorations of the Green and Colorado rivers, first recommended an inventory of all streams for their irrigation value. As the second director of the United States Geological Survey the scientist/explorer got his chance to test the usefulness of his theories. The first of billions of daily stream flow observations was made in Embudo on January 1, 1889. The money for the small stone station came from funds earmarked by Congress for the "arid West." The location on the Rio Grande River, some 43 miles west of Santa Fe, was selected for its easy access by rail and general good weather. After Embudo the USGS would come to operate 4,461 gaging stations and many more streamgages that help to forecast floods and droughts.

Avalon Dam

Carlsbad

1889



Newcomers looking to farm in the Pecos Valley soon faced the reality that little rain fell onto potential cropland and when it did the new water often triggered torrential flooding across the mostly flat plain. The solution was a dam across the Pecos River, one of the first in the United States constructed with a fill of loose rock and an an earth-filled face to greet the current. Floodwaters overwhelmed the dam within four years. The Avalon Dam was rebuilt, accompanied by a wooden irrigation flume that was said to be the largest in the country - almost 500 feet long and 47 feet high. The privately-funded Carlsbad Project was soon irrigating 15,000 acres of arid Pecos Valley land. Cotton and alfalfa thrived. Control of the Avalon Dam was eventually turned over to the federal government which raised the height to 50 feet and then 60, nearly doubling the productive size of farmland. But the Carlsbad Irrigation District continues to be locally operated, a model for water usage in the American West that has been recognized as a National Historic Landmark.

Chama Depot

Chama
1890s



The Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad began laying tracks in 1880 to tap into the mineral resources of New Mexico and western Colorado. To enable more flexibility in conquering the rugged mountains a three-foot wide "narrow gauge" railroad was selected for the job. On New Year's Eve 1880 the line reached Chama. Soon thereafter lumber mills sprouted in the area that would power the local economy for the next 90 years. Only two years after the Denver and Rio Grande abandoned the line the states of New Mexico and Colorado took joint ownership in a unique partnership to run a heritage railroad. The Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad quickly became one of America's premier tourist railroads, named for the Toltec Gorge that defines much of the route and the Cumbres Pass the railroad crosses at 10,015 feet. It is the highest elevation any narrow gauge railroad reaches on the continent. The western terminus of the 64-mile route was in Chama - elevation 7,863 feet - whose Victorian-style depot featured Stick Style wooden trim and fish-scale siding. In its time the passenger station has been whitewashed with green trim and painted deep red with light colored eaves in contrast to its current yellow with brown highlights. Chama also serves as the railroad yard for the Cumbres and Toltec that has been designated both a National Historic Landmark and a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark.

New Mexico Military Institute

Roswell
1891



The New Mexico Military Institute (NMMI) operates as America's only state-supported co-educational college preparatory military boarding school. Females attended NMII from its beginnings in 1891, although not as cadets. Fully accredited coeducational status was achieved in 1977. The Hagerman Barracks, constructed in 1908 to house 120 cadets and a dozen officers, is one of the biggest splashes of Gothic Revival architecture to be seen in all of New Mexico. James John Hagerman began his working life in Michigan, constructing railroad ties. Afflicted by tuberculosis at the age of 35, Hagerman began a peripatetic existence seeking relief that took him to Switzerland, Italy, Colorado, and eventually - in 1892 at the age of 54 - to New Mexico. By that time he had made a fortune in gold and silver mining. Once on the Jingle Bob Ranch outside Roswell Hagerman began developing the Pecos Valley with railroad and irrigation projects. He donated 40 acres of land for a permanent home for NMMI in 1895.

Hodgin Hall

Albuquerque

1892



In the 19th century this building - known as the Main Building until 1936 - was the University of New Mexico. Local architect Jesse Wheelock provided the design, adapting the brawny Richardsonian Romanesque style that was in vogue for a brief period between 1888 and 1895. Nearly every civic structure built in America in that time received the same treatment of broad gables, a powerful arched entranceway, and perhaps a tower or two based on the work of Boston architect Henry Hobson Richardson. The three-and-one half story red brick-and-sandstone edifice offered office space, classrooms and everything else for the 108 students. As new buildings arrived with the new century University President George Tight envisioned a campus displaying "authentic touches of a robust Indian culture." When Main Building's roof failed to pass inspection in 1908 Tight seized the moment and ordered a transformation to a Pueblo Revival style during the rebuild. All traces of derivative Eastern architecture were hidden under tan stucco and the University of New Mexico had a trend-setting model for the style that would come to define its campus.

Miller House

Hillsboro

1894



Gold was first found in this area in 1877 in loose pieces of rock. Within ten years gold ore was being extracted from the Rattlesnake vein of the Opportunity Mine and Hillsboro was the county seat. By 1904 the community had produced more than \$6 million worth of gold and silver. Not all of the treasure was hauled away, however. In 1894, George Tambling Miller used recycled gold ore in black slag blocks to construct a small, one-story residence. It is the only "gold dust" house in New Mexico.