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## EPILOGUE

The abandonment of the Salinas foreshadowed the calamity that ultimately would overwhelm the rest of the colony. In the heat of August 1680, the Pueblos attacked in force. Blood flowed at isolated Spanish settlements throughout the colony, and at the remaining missions too.

In Santa Fe, the Pueblos lay siege to Spaniards who had taken refuge in the old adobe Palace of the Governors. After fierce fighting in the palace plaza, the grieving Spanish remnant straggled down the Rio Grande, joining refugees from the Salinas missions and the southern part of the colony. When they were far south, beyond the reach of the enraged and temporarily unified Pueblos, the Spanish refugees set up a semi-permanent camp at the crossing of the Rio Grande called "the Pass to the North" - "El Paso del Norte." The uprising was startlingly successful.

Twelve years later Don Diego de Vargas led the Reconquest of New Mexico. Lessons were learned from the painful experience of the seventeenth century. This time, Spain adopted much more "live-and-let-live" policies toward the Indians. Indian culture, including religious ceremonies, were tolerated as Spain attempted to better integrate New Mexico into the empire. Spain needed New Mexico, if for no other reason than to serve as a buffer against other European powers, whose empires in North America were rapidly expanding toward Spain's possessions.

Spaniards filtered north and reoccupied the scattered settlements in the Rio Grande Valley, but the increasing presence of Apaches delayed resettlement of the Salinas. Apaches traveled freely through the unprotected old Salinas Province, using Abo Pass to launch raids on pueblos and Spanish settlements along the Rio Grande.

In 1750 Governor Tomas Velez Cachupin sent detachments of Spanish and Pueblo soldiers into the abandoned province to hinder the Apache raids. The small bands of troops temporarily reoccupied the slowly crumbling old missions of Quarai and Abo, both of which had springs and were close to travel routes. Waterless Las Humanas was too isolated to be of strategic importance.

The Pueblo people never returned to the Salinas, and not until the early nineteenth century did Spaniards begin to trickle back to stay. Lured by the empty farmlands, Miguel Lucero and his family settled near Quarai. Working with one eye out for hostile Indians, they rebuilt rooms and installed an irrigation system. The Luceros and other citizens of Manzano, a tiny settlement nearby, began to build their village church near the old mission, only to be attacked in a series of Apache raids about 1830. The shell of the grand old mission church, La Purisima Concepcion de Cuarac, which had lasted surprisingly well until then, was apparently torched in the fighting.

The story was similar at Abo. There was spotty subsistence farming and even a little sheep herding, but these were always isolated and dangerous settlements. The evidence in the village dumps indicates that Abo was periodically abandoned when Apache raids grew in number and ferocity.

When Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821, there was an official celebration up in Santa Fe, but the event went largely unnoticed in the remote farming area of the Salinas. The distant change in government did not make very much difference. Indian raids continued. Even when the Salinas became part of the United States in 1848, after the war between the United States and Mexico, the impact was hardly discernible.

Travelers who came through the old province took back reports of the three village ruins with their remarkable mission remains. About this time Las Humanas acquired a new name. The story of the "Quivira," for which Coronado had searched way back in 1540, was embellished in New Mexico folklore with wishful thinking about lost treasure. Quivira became Gran Quivira, the ephemeral prize for which everyone had been looking. No one knows who first attached the name to the cactus-covered ruins of Las Humanas, but it stuck. Thus in death the ruins acquired a name the village never had in life.

About 1900, in response to active advertising by the Territory of New Mexico, which was eager for immigration, the old Salinas Province began to be homesteaded. Many of the new immigrants came from Texas and Arkansas, which were experiencing hard times.

Ancient Indian fields and old mission farms became part of large dry-land farming operations, raising pinto beans. Everyone knew about the three great ruins, of course, and scattered smaller ones too. There were many childhood exploring expeditions among the falling stone walls, and vintage photographs show Sunday picnics by the missions.

The ruins of Las Humanas Pueblo, now called "Gran Quivira" by local people, were on federal land that had not been homesteaded. In 1909 President William Howard Taft proclaimed the ruins "Gran Quivira National Monument" under legislation that permitted him

to set aside federal lands of particular scientific or historic importance. When the National Park Service was created in 1916, Gran Quivira National Monument came under its care.

In 1913 the Museum of New Mexico acquired the Quarai ruins from private ownership, but did not obtain clear title until 1932. In 1937 the ruins of Abo also came under the stewardship of the Museum of New Mexico, through purchase and donation by a group of University of New Mexico alumni. Thus all three ruins came into public ownership, and were made accessible to researchers and the general public. This split administration was simplified in 1980, when all three were combined into Salinas National Monument, a unit of the National Park Service. The name was later changed to Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument.

Salinas Province is quiet now. Rural highways pass near the ruins, and the little town of Mountainair, site of the park headquarters, lies between the three units of the park: gray Gran Quivira on a dry ledge of the Chupadero Mesa; lovely Quarai with its faithful spring and grove of cottonwoods; and Abo, where red sandstone walls still tower thirty-eight feet high. Ragged stones that once echoed the Tompiro and Tiwa languages, then graceful Spanish, and finally English, now resound with the chatter of children spilling out of a school bus. For the park rangers, it's time to tell this remarkable human story again.