

July 31,
1948

Mr. Philip Wooton,
LIFE MAGAZINE
9 Rockefeller Plaza,
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Wooton:-

At the suggestion of Miss Larson, your representative in this city, I am mailing you herewith a color transparency of a special event which took place here on July 11th. The film has just been returned from the processor and was somehow delayed en route. It is possible that you may be interested in this for the Southwest issue of your magazine. From what Miss Larson tells me, this will be in contrast to the material you are using for this article, but it might, nevertheless, be used as a background. So few people realize the history which lies behind the present day life of this part of the world. I have covered all this quite completely in a book to appear early next year entitled FOLLOW THE RIO GRANDE, being published by Duell, Sloan & Pearce. A black and white print, very similar to this color shot, will probably replace an earlier landscape made at this site in the forthcoming book.

I have attached a brief caption to the transparency covering both this event and history in as few words as possible. I could enlarge this if you should wish more detail for the story of that journey is interesting indeed.

Hoping that you may find this subject of interest for your New Mexico coverage, I am

Very sincerely yours,

Twenty two years before the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, Don Juan de Onate led a band of Spanish colonizers up the Rio Grande from Chihuahua, Mexico, to found the first Capital in the Province of Nueva Mexico on September 8, 1598.

Under the guidance of Major General Charles H. Corlett, a memorial celebration of the 350th anniversary of this event was held in the Espanola valley thirty five miles north of Santa Fe. On Sunday July 11th, a cross was unveiled in memory of Onate at the site of this first capital overlooking the Rio Grande, where buried traces of this ancient city bear witness to the first established Mission in the West.

Photograph by Laura Gilpin, Santa Fe, N.M.