

Part 1. Historical Development

A. Historical Background, Development, and Use

Alexander Pigeon's Ranch and Inn

The Pigeon's Ranch house is a three room adobe structure situated on the northeast bank of the Glorieta Creek, adjacent State Highway 50, a little over twenty miles from Santa Fe, New Mexico. In a confined valley with rugged slopes, the surrounding countryside, formerly pastures and fields on the limited bottom land, are now covered with stands of ponderosa, pinon, juniper, cottonwood, and under-brush. As early as 1815, the land had been claimed as part of a Spanish land grant.¹

The date of construction and the builder of the present structure are not known.² It was standing in 1862 and was owned by Alexander Pigeon or Valle at that time. Alexander Pigeon is a man of mystery. From the notes and research of Andrew Young and Bart Barbour can be pieced together a sketchy biography. Of French descent, he was born Alexandre Valle in or near St. Louis around 1815 (he gave various dates for his birth) and took the name Pigeon when his mother married Hyacinth Pigeon of Carondelet, Missouri (now part of St. Louis). Probably in the late 1830s, as a young man, he joined the Santa Fe Trail trade. He was accused of stealing from his employer, but no record has been found of the trader taking him to court. By 1842-3 he was in Santa Fe. He was a trader on the Santa Fe Trail and had taken trains across the prairie; he most likely needed a ranch to winter his stock. According to the 1850 census, he lived with his wife Carmen (various spellings) in the capital and operated a "grocery," a frontier store that sold mostly liquor. He was a well-known gambler and land speculator when he turned his attention to speculating on land in the Pecos valley. Land records show that he was illiterate. At the time he established Pigeon's ranch, he acquired an

¹ The original land claim dates from 1815 when three Santa Fe elites, including the acting Governor, claimed a land grant west of the Pecos Pueblo Grant. Shortly afterward the grant application was revised to a location north not west of the Pecos Pueblo grant. Alexander Pigeon, known also as Alexander Valle, eventually acquired the unconfirmed land grant claim in 1852. The grant had difficult to define boundaries and could have been interpreted to extend across the valley, including Pigeon's Ranch (land speculation, especially in old grants, was rampant at the time). However, this grant, the Valle grant, was eventually confirmed (in 1860) but for only 574 acres in the Pecos River canyon above Pecos village. Valle, as possessor of a land grant claim could not legally also secure title to the land on which the Pigeon Ranch house stands, sold the ranch to George Hebert. Hebert filed a homestead claim after the land had been surveyed by the government, but Hebert sold his rights to the homestead claim to Walter M. Taber before perfecting title. Taber received the title from the U. S. Government in 1891, the land patent for the 160 acre homestead, which included Pigeon's Ranch. See appendix "Chain of Title." "Juan de Dios Peña, Francisco Ortiz and Juan Bautista Aguilar Petition for Lands Outside the League of Pecos, 1815," Spanish Archives of New Mexico (microfilm), Reel 4, Frame 684, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico. For a history of speculation in the grants see G. Emlen Hall, *Four Leagues of Pecos, A Legal History of the Pecos Grant, 1800-1933* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), *passim*; Also see "Alexander Valle Grant," Land Grant Records, Land Claims Record Book, Vol. 1, pp. 466-83, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe and U. S. Surveyor General's file 18, report 54, microfilm reel 14; Many of the documents are translated in "Claims in the Territory of New Mexico," House of Representatives, 35th Congress, 1st Session, Report 457, pp. 279-99 for Valle grant; Taber homestead deed recorded Book X, page 201 and Book 551, p. 742, Santa Fe County Records Office.

² Period accounts confirm that there were no developments along the trail in the Pigeon's Ranch site at the time of the war with Mexico, 1846-8; See such standard travel accounts as: Frederick A. Wislizenus, *A Tour of Northern Mexico* (1848 edition), pp. 18-19 describe pass, old Pecos to Apache Canyon, June 28, 1846; Frank S. Edwards, *A Campaign in New Mexico* (1847 edition), describes trip from old Pecos to Santa Fe August 17-18, 1846; *Report of Lieut. J. W. Abert, of his Examination of New Mexico in the Years 1846-'47* (1848 edition), p. 45 describes his September 27, 1846 crossing of the pass; Richard Smith Elliott, *The Mexican War Correspondence of Richard Smith Elliott*, Mark L. Gardner and Marc Simmons, editors, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), p. 67 on August 18, 1846 crossed Glorieta Pass; George Rutledge Gibson, *Over the Chihuahua and Santa Fe Trails, 1847-1848, George Rutledge's Journal*, Robert W. Frazer, ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), pp. 62-3, crossed the pass April 28, 1848. None mention developments in the Pigeon's Ranch area. W. H. H. Davis would have mentioned any development there as well, but when he passed through in 1854 he only describes the terrain; see W. H. H. Davis, *El Gringo, New Mexico and Her People* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982 reprint of 1857 edition).

interest in the large but unconfirmed Spanish land grant adjoining the Pecos Pueblo grant. Around this time he began re-using his legal name, Alexander Valle. The grant would become the Alexander Valle grant, on the north boundary of the Pecos Pueblo Grant adjacent modern Pecos village, and was confirmed by Congress in 1860. Around 1865, Valle moved to a farm on the grant where he died June 2, 1880. Valle was ruined financially by the 1870s, either because of the war or his gambling habit. Later authors claimed Alexander Valle's earlier use of the name Pigeon was the result of a nickname since he danced the fandango "pigeon-winged," or that he spoke with a strong French accent making his conversations in "Pidgin English." Since the reputed nickname predates Valle's death, he may have encouraged its use to hide his past.³

Available sources suggest that Pigeon built, or had built, the adobe ranch house after his decision to build a Santa Fe Trail-side "house of entertainment" sometime in the 1850s.⁴ After the War with Mexico, improvement of the Santa Fe trail and increased traffic coincided with the construction of trail side complexes, ranches, farms and houses/inns such as Pigeon's, Lucien Maxwell's at Cimarron, and Samuel Watrous's home at La Junta (Watrous). The architecture was a mix of local and imported traditions or vernacular styles. Finishes were crude, but these Santa Fe Trail traders also brought in building materials by freight wagon, window glass and sash, shutters and screens, worked wooden railings, and more.⁵ Pigeon brought his last wagon train across the Santa Fe Trail in 1859; one would speculate that this was his opportune time to bring from across the prairie from the Missouri ports finer finished building material, including window glass.⁶

At the confined east entrance to Glorieta Pass, he operated the Santa Fe Trail side inn as well as a cattle and sheep ranch with fenced-in fields, described as "stretching for a mile along the creek bottom." We lack contemporary descriptions of the ranch house during Pigeon's occupancy, but according to one traveler, "the valley was well cultivated, and a rich farm, more than a mile in length, extends up to Pigeon's Ranch."⁷ In order to fill his granaries, he raised and purchased corn and hay. As operator of a freight and stage stop, Pigeon was recalled as a "genial, vivacious and obliging, popular host with

³ See Andrew Young files and Bart Barbour draft report on Pigeon's Ranch, Pecos National Historical Park files; Yvonne R. Oakes, *Pigeon's Ranch and the Glorieta Battlefield: an Archeological Assessment*, Museum of New Mexico, Office of Archeological Studies, Archeology Notes 123 (Santa Fe, 1995), pp. 15-16; and his obituary in Santa Fe *Weekly New Mexican*, June 14, 1880.

⁴ Pigeon's inn was open at least by the fall of 1858 since surveyor general Pelham and his bride honeymooned there in October 1858, Jane Lenz Elder and David J. Weber, eds., *Trading in Santa Fe: John M. Kingsbury's Correspondence with James Josiah Webb, 1853-1861* (Dallas, TX: Southern Methodist University, 1996), p. 118; by that time weekly stages operated along the Santa Fe Trail and would have stopped there for, at least, new horses. A diary for 1859 suggests Pigeon left the ranch to a manager while he spent much time in Santa Fe, especially at the gaming tables; see, David Remley, ed., "Adios Nuevo Mexico," *the Santa Fe Journal of John Watts in 1859* (Las Cruces: Yucca Tree Press, 1999), pp. 4, 43. Military parties were stopping at Pigeon's ranch earlier, see 1857 mention of the "strange and funny Frenchman," "Jim [sic.] Pidgeon's" ranch as a camp stop in Edward K. Eckert and Nicholas J. Amato, ed., *Ten Years in the Saddle, the Memoirs of William Woods Averell* (San Rafael, California: Presidio Press, 1978), p. 112.

⁵ Glass was brought across the trail as early as 1844; Marc Simmons interview with author September 6, 2007.

⁶ Elder and Weber, *Trading in Santa Fe*, pp. 160, 180.

⁷ Quote from James F. Meline, *Two Thousand Miles on Horseback, Santa Fe and Back, a Summer Tour Through Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, and New Mexico, in the Year 1866* (Albuquerque: Horn & Wallace, 1966), pp. 115-16.

travelers.”⁸ In March 1862, his ranch and inn would be in the path of two advancing Civil War military forces.⁹

Contemporary accounts of the March 26-28, 1862, Battle at Glorieta, unfortunately, do not provide detailed descriptions of Pigeon's Ranch.¹⁰ Uses of Pigeon's Ranch house can be gleaned from soldiers' accounts about the battle:

- 1) Confederate's advance troops or pickets arrived at Pigeon's Ranch house on the 25th and stayed there;¹¹
- 2) On the morning of the 26th Union soldiers captured Confederate pickets at Pigeon's, some of whom were playing cards in one of the rooms when captured;¹²
- 3) After the battle of Apache Canyon, some 400 retreating Union troops established a hasty field hospital in the building around 9 p.m. on the 26th; some of the wounded died in the building that night;¹³
- 4) During the night of the 26th Union troops stayed in and around the building, some taking corn, hay and other supplies from granaries;¹⁴
- 5) During the morning of the 27th Union troops retreated to Koslowski's Trading Post except for a hospital steward and wounded who stayed in Pigeon's building through the 27th and after;¹⁵
- 6) Returning Union troops, some 900 men, arrived at the field hospital at Pigeon's Ranch house around 10 a.m.¹⁶ on the morning of the 28th, and found Union pickets taking breakfast there;¹⁷
- 7) Union forces take break and fill their canteens, while camp established at the ranch, but officers stayed for only an hour or hour and a half in the building when the Battle at Pigeon's Ranch had begun;¹⁸

⁸ Quote from William C. Whitford, *The Colorado Volunteers in the Civil War, the New Mexico Campaign 1862* (Glorieta, New Mexico: Rio Grande Press, 1971 reprint of 1906 edition), p. 85. The extent of Pigeon's stage stop operation is unknown. The first mail stage line began operation in July 1850, but was only monthly with mules pulling a mud wagon. In 1857 the Santa Fe Trail stage became semimonthly, then weekly in 1858, suggesting an increased need of trail side services at that time. After the war, Concord stage coaches were introduced and stages ran daily, but this was after Pigeon sold the ranch. Morris F. Taylor, *First Mail West: Stagecoach Lines on the Santa Fe Trail* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1971), p. 1, 16.

⁹ For details of events see Don E. Alberts, *The Battle of Glorieta, Union Victory in the West* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1998), *passim*; Also useful are Thomas S. Edrington and John Taylor, *The Battle of Glorieta Pass, a Gettysburg in the West, March 26-28, 1862* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998) and Flint Whitlock, *Distant Bugles, Distant Drums, The Union Response to the Confederate Invasion of New Mexico* (Niwtot: University Press of Colorado, 2006).

¹⁰ Example accounts are *Rebels on the Rio Grande, The Civil War Journal of A. B. Peticolas*, Don E. Alberts, ed., (Albuquerque: Merit Press, 1993), pp. 78-81, which describes fields, fences, and mentions the house, but not in detail; Ovando J. Hollister, *Colorado Volunteers in New Mexico, 1862*, Richard Harwell, ed. (Chicago: R. R. Donnelley & Sons, 1962 reprint of 1863 edition), pp. 94, 97, 104, 105, 109-125, 136, 217. Official accounts have been compiled from *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* in Calvin P. Horn and Williams S. Wallace, *Union Army Operations in the Southwest* (Albuquerque: Horn & Wallace, 1961) – none describe Pigeon's Ranch house in detail. Col. Manuel Chaves was at the ranch March 22, before the battle, and would provide testimony for Valle's war claim, but does not give building details; Chaves affidavit, July 19, 1870, Rejected Claim of Alexander Valle, Folder 49, Claims Considered and Rejected, Box 148, Record Group 92, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster, National Archives and Records Center (NARS), Washington, D. C., copy in Brigida Blasi collection #543, Pecos National Historical Park files, hereinafter Valle claim, NARS.

¹¹ Alberts, *Battle of Glorieta*, p. 47.

¹² *Ibid.*; Chivington in "Pet Lambs," *Denver Republican*, April 20, 1890 states at "Pigeon's Ranch, where they found them [Confederate pickets] engaged in a game of poker with Valle, surnamed Pigeon, and captured them."

¹³ *Ibid.*; Captain Walker and other reports in Horn and Wallace, *Union Army, passim.*; Holister, *Colorado Volunteers*, 108-9; Valle and Dr. J. W. Cadogan affidavits, Valle claim, NARS.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ In 1862 there were no standard time zones, thus there are discrepancies on the exact time of events.

¹⁷ Alberts, *Battle of Glorieta*, p. 95.

¹⁸ Surgeon E. J. Bailey affidavit, May 8, 1971, Valle Claim, NARS, gives the one and half hours in the building.

- 8) During the Battle at Pigeon's Ranch Union artillery were lined up in front of the building, Union troops used the adobe fence wall of the compound as cover, cavalry was located in the ranch or its rear until moved, and Union troops were located from behind the compound up to and on Sharpshooter's Ridge;¹⁹
- 9) Confederate prisoners were held in the compound;²⁰
- 10) That the Pigeon family were in residence and tried to flee when captured by Confederate forces;²¹
- 11) Confederate forces pushed Union forces (or Union forces retreated) out from around Pigeon's Ranch house, and took the building the late afternoon of the 28th;²²
- 12) Confederate forces camped in and around the building the night of the 28th until the morning of the 30th;²³
- 13) The use of the building as a field hospital by Union stewards continued through March and April into May; Union troops and officers, including Col. Chivington used the building briefly during this period;²⁴
- 14) On the 29th and after Union and Confederate dead were buried near the buildings, fences, and in "open fields."²⁵

Major Chivington claimed that the hospital flag he placed on the building the 26th protected it from direct bombardment during the heated fighting on the 28th, but the building, caught in the cross fire, was damaged, especially walls, doors, windows and furnishings.²⁶ Several later sources state that Pigeon's ranch house was used as the headquarters for Union Colonel John Slough, but evidence suggests that the Battle of

¹⁹ Alberts, *Battle of Glorieta*, pp. 94-119; Lt. Col. Tappan on troops on Sharpshooters Ridge and Captain Ritter for cannon in front of the ranch, reports in Horn and Wallace, *Union Army*, pp. 26-9, as well as Col Scurry (p. 34), who reported Union troops behind the "adobe wall," probably the western wall of the Pigeon Ranch complex, when he took command and "attacked the enemy who were at the ranch."

²⁰ Alberts, *Battle of Glorieta*, p. 110.

²¹ "Pet Lambs," *Denver Republican*, April 20, 1890; A. A. Hayes, in *New Colorado and the Santa Fe Trail*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1880), pp. 169, who claims to have interviewed Pigeon in 1879 about the battle, gave the often quoted line credited to Pigeon that "'Gooverment mahns vas at my ranch, and fill 'is canteen viz my viskey (and Gooverment *nevaire* pay me for zat viskey); and Texas mahns coom oop, and soorprise zem, and zey foight six hour by my vatch, and my vatch vas slow!'"

²² Alberts, *Battle of Glorieta*, p. 120.

²³ *Ibid.*; Harvey Holcomb, a former Confederate private, recalled sleeping in the corral and eating Pigeon's corn meant for the horses, see Harvey Holcomb to Thomas L. Greer, August 19, 1927, in Glorieta Battle file, Chavez Library, Museum of New Mexico.

²⁴ Chivington and Valle affidavits, Valle claim, NARS; Hollister, *First Colorado*, pp. 106, 109 states: "No cheers for me. I was sick at the wounds of Martin Dutro, and spent the night watching his life ebb away." "As we lowered his remains to their last resting place, all the stoicism I could muster was insufficient to suppress some bitter tears at his early and cruel death. The other boys died instantly, one shot through the head, the other through the heart. They were among our very best men." Bristol, Pratt, Keel, Hall, Logan and Patterson were wounded, and "left in the hospital at Pigeon's Ranche."

²⁵ Alberts, *Battle of Glorieta*, p. 125; Col. Scurry report in Horn and Wallace, *Union Army*, p. 33-5; Hollister, *Colorado Volunteers*, p. 120 reported 35 brought in and buried "on the field"; Whitford, *Colorado Volunteers*, p. 125, states "over seventy dead bodies of Confederate soldiers were...lying on the earthen floor of the largest apartment in Valle's house (Pigeon Ranch), gathered from the battlefield and awaiting burial" -- He also states most of the Union dead were buried in an "open field to the east of Pigeon's ranch, and by the side of those who had fallen two days before"; Texan B. H. Tyler recorded "We dug a hole large enough for them [Confederate dead] and laid them two deep and spread one layer of blankets over them and filled in on them with dirt. It was bad, but the best we could do," quoted in *Rocky Mountain News*, April 26, 1993, p. 8A; Harris, *A Tale*, p. 51, states that Confederates were buried within "the corral"; Louis Hommel in the *Las Vegas Gazette*, May 23, 1874, states "The graves of the dead in the field on Pigeon's Ranch have been made to deliver up their contents for burial in the cemetery at Santa Fe; but not a single corpse could be recognized or identified to show whether it belonged to Texan or Federal soldier; all bear the following description on their headboards: 'Unknown, Removed from Pigeon's Ranch.'" As quoted in William A. Keleher, *Turmoil in New Mexico, 1846-1868* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982 reprint of 1952 edition), p. 179. The military cemetery in Santa Fe was established in 1870 on land donated by the Catholic church.

²⁶ Chivington and Valle affidavits, Valle claim, NARS.

Glorieta began shortly after his arrival making his tenure in the building brief, if at all. He quickly moved to Sharpshooter's Ridge when the battle at Pigeon's Ranch began.²⁷

The earliest known graphic depiction of the "Battle of Glorieta" is a water color by Eugene Pierrot, Fourth Regiment, Texas Mounted Volunteers.²⁸ The house shown in the painting is a single story, flat-roofed adobe building with a portico supported by five columns. On the front are an off center doorway between two windows. An adobe fence extends from the west side of the house. Across the road (Santa Fe Trail) is a wooden fence enclosure, probably a corral. The Fourth Texas Mounted Volunteers were at Glorieta, and Pierrot witnessed this scene portrayed in his painting, and the building depicted has been suggested as Pigeon's Ranch house. This is questionable, especially in contrast to testimony from Pigeon's war damages claim, which describes a much larger complex. His painting is probably of the Johnson's Ranch area and Apache canyon during the first day of the "Battle of Glorieta." Johnson's Ranch house was a single story adobe with flat roof, like the structure depicted in the Pierrot painting.

After the Civil War, Pigeon (as Alexander Valle) submitted evidence for a claim for reimbursement for goods stolen and household goods destroyed by Union forces during the battle and after. The National Archives file is extensive. Testimony by supporters of the Valle claim against the government provided some information on building use: Donaciano Vigil of Pecos claimed that Pigeon operated a "house of entertainment [a wayside inn or tavern] for travelers and the public" and the house "table and bedding were ample for the accommodation of thirty or forty persons for a night." He also stated that the yard could handle two or three freight wagon trains of several hundred animals; Antonio Romero of La Glorieta also stated Pigeon operated a hotel or "house of entertainment."²⁹ Major Chivington of the Colorado Volunteers stated that Pigeon's Ranch had grain (corn) and forage for teams on the trail, which he used for his men March 26th, 1862.³⁰

Valle claimed he was a U. S. government forage agent and bought hay and grains (corn) from Pecos farms for sale to government trains traveling between Fort Union and Fort Marcy. His claim states 31,000 lbs. corn, 3,000 lbs. fodder and 10,000 lbs. of hay were taken, March 26-8, suggesting sizeable storage or granary outbuildings. He stated that troops also killed cattle on the ranch, which suggested a herd grazed near the ranch house. He stated that during the early 1860s he had a residence, public "house of entertainment," and kept large quantities of forage and supplies for public and government wagon trains in "my premises, corrals, stables, lots, granaries, and outhouses."³¹

Using this information, and later photographs and archeological testing suggest a sizeable complex of buildings, corrals, stables, granaries or storage yards, water well, and adobe fencing or walls. Vigil's testimony of the space for 30 to 40 people suggest, even in frontier conditions, a sizeable structure, possibly the hundred foot long front with fifty

²⁷ Alberts, *Battle of Glorieta*, pp. 100-5; The popular New Mexico guide by the WPA gives the house as the headquarters, probably based on information provided by Tom Greer. Works Projects Administration, *New Mexico a Guide to a Colorful State* (New York: Hastings House, 1940), p. 241. See Bailey in footnote 18.

²⁸ In Prints and Photographs Collection, OP 22, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

²⁹ Affidavits of Donaciano Vigil, Alexander Valle, and Manuel Chaves, 1870-1871, Valle claim, NARS.

³⁰ Chivington affidavit, Valle claim, NARS.

³¹ Valle affidavit, Valle claim, NARS. Valle may have exaggerated his losses, but the claim was denied not because of the petitioners veracity but because of the correct belief that most damage and loss was caused by the Confederates.

foot wings described by later observers.³² According to Valle's claim, the number of table ware, chamber pots, blankets and other bedding also confirm a substantial number of rooms or accommodations for guests at the inn. The square feet needed to house the claimed amount of corn and silage suggest a building around seventy feet long, which corresponds to archeological estimates.³³ The hay would require more space.

All this information suggests that the Pigeon Ranch house complex was larger than depicted in the Pierrot water color. The complex included the Pigeon family's residence and a "house for entertainment," with room for 30 to 40 guests. Granaries and outbuildings stood connected to or adjacent the house. The flat roof and general elongated shape of the building in the painting of private Pierrot is of the common style of adobe structures nearby, such as the Johnson Ranch. But, until further evidence confirms the Pierrot water color depiction, it should not be considered an accurate depiction of the 1862 Pigeon's Ranch complex.

A more correct description of the building's design would be of the French or French Creole tradition used in Missouri of the "double-house." Valle was from the St. Louis area, which had a long French building tradition. New Mexico inherited some of these traditions via the Santa Fe Trail, for example, as seen in the Maxwell house in Cimaron (described by others as a Mississippi valley building of French tradition recreated by Maxwell, himself of French descent, in New Mexico).³⁴ The "double house" contained two buildings adjacent or connected to each other, one house usually the residence of the owner's family, the other house contained the business – one roof covered the two separate "houses." Along the front would be the *galerie*, a broad front porch created by the extension of the roof line. The front of the Pigeon's Ranch complex fits this French traditional design found in Missouri, a double house with single roof, the east half probably the inn, the west the family residence (future archeological work may confirm this). The *galerie* across the front and wood shingle roof (very much in the French building tradition) would have been possible because of the abundant timber in the area around Pigeon's Ranch, unlike other areas of New Mexico. A logging trail ran from the house up to the woods on Glorieta Mesa and is mentioned in 1862 battle accounts. The structure in 1862 may have looked much like it did when photographed in 1880, and described in the next section.

The overall square ranch house with courtyard reflects the traditional New Mexican hacienda, though with the unusual – for New Mexico -- shed roof. The adobe wall connected to the house on the west-side served as protection for horse corrals, a large vehicle yard, and storage rooms, granaries. Two granaries with gable roofs are in the corner, very similar to the New Mexican practice of placing circular *torreons* (circular towers) in the corners for both defense and grain storage. One Civil War historian's description of this area states: "In back of the main living quarters...in which loaded wagons were brought in for protection... Attached to it were sheds with stalls for draft animals. A formidable wall ran from the sheds back to the ravine and then surrounded a yard in which teams were kept and fed."³⁵

³² A. B. Wadleigh, "Ranching in New Mexico, 1886-1890," *New Mexico Historical Review* 27: 1 (January 1952), p.20.

³³ Jonathan Periam, *The Home and Farm Manual* (New York: Crown, 1984 reprint of 1884 edition), pp. 422-3, *passim.*, provides suggested amounts of space for storing hay, corn, and other silage; John P. Wilson, "Archeological Investigations at Pigeon's Ranch, New Mexico," Prepared for Santa Fe Planning Associates, Santa Fe, NM, December 1984, p. 5.

³⁴ Lawrence R. Murphy, *Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell, Napoleon of the Southwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983), p. 7.

³⁵ Martin H. Hall, *Sibley's New Mexico Campaign* (Austin: University of Texas Press), p. 146.

In his claim for damages, Valle reported repairing the ranch during the summer of 1862 and after. The troops had taken vigas and other wood from the structure for fires for warmth, he claimed.³⁶ Travelers in 1862-63, Jacob Houghton and family and the Joseph Pratt Allyn party, had to camp outdoors at Pigeon's because the inn repairs were not finished.³⁷ The Senator Dolittle commission stayed at Pigeon's ranch (and had a well known meeting with Kit Carson there) in an obviously repaired inn July 1-2, 1865, but left no description of the building.³⁸

Forty-four years after the battle, William C. Whitford visited Pigeon's Ranch and provided the first description of the building. He believed it to be an accurate depiction of the ranch in 1862. He wrote:

His [Pigeon's] ranch was located in a defile of the canon [*sic.*], so narrow that it was fully occupied by buildings, the roads, an arroyo, in which flows a small stream some months in a year. In the accompanying view is seen the principal structure, the rear of which formed a kind of Asiatic caravansary, where guests could lodge by themselves and eat their own meals. Beyond was a double corral for enclosing and protecting loaded wagons, and to it was attached sheds with stalls for draft horses and mules. Back of these, running up well into a ravine, was a strong adobe wall that surrounded a yard in which teams could also be kept and fed.³⁹

Later writers estimated the house had 22 or 23 rooms.⁴⁰ Three decades later, Gertrude Harris visited the site and wrote Pigeon's Ranch was "originally built in the form of a rectangular fort with a court in the center, and it contained twenty-two rooms. The rear of the buildings formed a kind of Asiatic caravansary."⁴¹

George Hebert's "Pigeon's Ranch"

In 1865, Valle (Pigeon) sold the ranch to George Hebert, a French-Canadian blacksmith and sometime partner in land deals.⁴² Hebert had earlier lived in Pecos village, one of the French settlers arriving in the 1850s, and had a blacksmith shop and worked farmlands along the Pecos River. Census enumerators as late as 1880 found at Pigeon's Ranch the fifty-three year old Hebert and his Canadian wife Isobel and children Mary and William.⁴³ In the complex were boarders, cooks, and laborers. An 1867

³⁶ Valle affidavit, Valle claim, NARS.

³⁷ See Houghton affidavit in Valle claim file, NARS; Joseph Pratt Allyn, *West by Southwest, Letters of Joseph Pratt Allyn, a Traveler Along the Santa Fe Trail, 1863*, David K. Strate, editor (Dodge City, Kansas: Kansas Heritage Center, 1984), p. 124.

³⁸ Lonnie J. White, ed., *Chronicle of a Congressional Journey* (Boulder, Colorado: Pruett, 1975), p. 40-1, 44, the party noted evidence of the battle, such as trees shattered by cannon balls.

³⁹ Whitford, *Colorado Volunteers*, p. 85.

⁴⁰ Thomas Greer estimated 22 rooms after he cleared the site in the 1920s, and William Mahan gave 23 as the number during his 1970s planning for a possible reconstruction; see Oakes, *Pigeon's Ranch*, p. 71, and *New Mexican*, November 7, 1971, p. D1.

⁴¹ Gertrude Harris, *A Tale of Men Who Knew Not Fear* (San Antonio: Alamo Press, 1935), pp. 44-5; Harris also noted that "[j]ust in front of the buildings was a deep well of spar[k]ling cool water which made it an ideal camping place for the troops. . . . This old well and the ruins of the old buildings, with three rooms still standing and used as a museum, are still found at Glorieta today [i.e., c.1935], and are well known attractions on the old Santa Fe Trail." A contemporary description, noting the 22 rooms has not been found. Harris is not a very credible source. Still, it is cited here because it offers a possibly useful description of the ranch, one that echoes other writers.

⁴² San Miguel County Clerks' Office, Las Vegas, NM, Deed Book # 2, pp. 127-31, indenture dated January 5, 1865.

⁴³ Marian Russell wrote that Hebert was a Pecos farmer and that Mrs. Hebert was the widow of a Captain Grayson, see *Land of Enchantment, Memoirs of Marian Russell along the Santa Fe Trail* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1984 reprint of 1954 edition), pp. 95-6; *New Mexican* December 14, 1895 says he had arrived in 1858 and was long in government service.

newspaper article reported on: “the admirable *cuisine* and other needful accommodations awaiting the tired and hungry traveler at Mr. George Hebert’s hotel at Pigeon’s Ranch.”⁴⁴

The Santa Fe *Weekly Gazette* of 1867 noted two improvements at the ranch. Hebert had the well re-dug and enlarged, undoubtedly in response to increased trail use by freighters and the stage line. Also, In August 1867, John P. Slough, former Union commander at Glorieta and now judge on New Mexico’s territorial courts, went to Pigeon’s Ranch with a party to select “suitable cemetery grounds for the interment of the brave soldiers who died in the battle near that place during the last war.”⁴⁵ The party selected a site one hundred feet square and sloping toward the road a quarter mile west from the ranch. The newspaper reported that Hebert deeded the land to the government and that the reburials were to begin immediately. Though unstated, this suggests Hebert desired the removal of Union and Confederate dead buried adjacent the ranch fences and house shortly after the battle in conjunction with his maintaining the corrals and fences.⁴⁶

The summer he acquired the Pigeon’s Ranch, Jicarilla Apache raided the Pecos valley, killed two shepherds near the ranch, wounded Hebert nearer the Pecos River.⁴⁷ The Apache had raided the valley in 1851, when Valle first purchased the Valle grant, raided Valle again in 1853, had stolen a mule in front of Pigeon’s Ranch house shortly after the Battle of Glorieta, and continued their raids through the 1860s.⁴⁸ In 1869, a special agent to the Indian Commission, Vincent Colyer, passed through New Mexico (staying at Pigeon’s in May 1869) to assess the situation.⁴⁹

Besides being a humanitarian, Colyer was a recognized Eastern artist and a member of the National Academy of Art. An 1869 sketch by Colyer held by the Albuquerque Museum (Fig. 3) portrays Pigeon’s Ranch.⁵⁰ He sketched the large complex from the east looking northwest up the Santa Fe Trail. Facing the road is the main structure with gable roof, porch, with a rear addition. The front has a porch and an off center door between three windows. Adjacent to it is another similarly sized house, but the artist left out details. And near it stands a small gabled building with less detail (possibly a granary or corn-crib). Split-rail fences enclose farm lands or pasturage east of

⁴⁴ Santa Fe *Weekly Gazette*, August 17, 1867, 2:3; *New Mexican*, April 27, 1867, 2:1

⁴⁵ Santa Fe *Weekly Gazette*, August 17, 1867, 2:3.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*; a letter by Koslowski had mentioned the remains of soldiers at Glorieta needing proper graves, see Santa Fe *Weekly Gazette*, December 15, 1866, 2:4. The activity coincided with the building of the Civil War monument in the Santa Fe plaza. Slough was murdered in Santa Fe December 15, 1867 so it is uncertain of follow-through on re-burials since he was the prime mover; see, Gary L. Roberts, *Death Comes for the Chief Justice* (Niwot, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1990) p. ix. The cemetery tract may be the same one now known as the Greer family cemetery described in Oakes, *Pigeon’s Ranch*, pp. 71, 74

⁴⁷ Report of Ben C. Cutler, Asst. Adjutant General to Commanding Officer, Fort Union, 3 June 1865 and July 12, 1868, and Col Francisco P. Abreu to General James Carleton, July 3, 1865, Arrott Fort Union Collection, vol 16, p. 328, Special Collections, Donnelly Library, New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas. Santa Fe *Weekly Gazette*, June 10, July 1, 1865; the editor of the *Gazette* June 10 reported the shepherds were the first killed by the Jicarilla Apache in the valley, while Juan Dedios of the Apache tribe recalled it was a period of hardship, drop in buffalo numbers, and competition for resources, which caused the raids -- see his recollections in Veronica E. Velarde Tiller, *The Jicarilla Apache* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), pp. 64-5.

⁴⁸ Calhoun to Lea, March 22, 1851, in Anne Heloise Abel, ed., *The Official Correspondence of James S. Calhoun While Indian Agent at Santa Fe and Superintendent of Indian Affairs in New Mexico* (Washington: GPO, 1915), p. 299; Valle’s 1853 “Claim of Indian Depredations” in files of Marc Simmons, Cerrillos, New Mexico; Annie Heloise Abel, “Indian Affairs in New Mexico Under the Administration of William Carr Lane, from the Journal of John Ward,” *New Mexico Historical Review* (July 1941), pp. 328-358, entries for July 28, September 10, and September 11, 1853 note Apache raids on Valle’s herd; Hollister, *Colorado Volunteers*, p. 217; Santa Fe *Weekly Gazette*, June 10, July 1, 1865, December 1, 1866, June 27, 1868.

⁴⁹ Vincent Colyer, “Report on Indians in Indian Territory, New Mexico, and Arizona, October 20, 1869,” in *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1869, popularized in Vincent Colyer, “Shall the Red-Men be Exterminated?” *Putnam’s Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art* (September 1869), pp 367-374.

⁵⁰ A watercolor of the same scene was painted by Colyer, but has not been located. It was listed in a catalog held by the Smithsonian Institute; see online at: <http://siris-artinventories.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?uri=full=3100001~!10729910#focus>

the buildings. The Santa Fe Trail curves in front of the three structures. Colyer does not show outbuildings, though they may have stood behind the buildings (as shown in 1880 photographs).

The "Pigeon's Ranch" sketched in 1869 was a stage stop run by Hebert for the Southern Overland Mail stage company (Barlow and Sanderson), operators of daily stages along the Santa Fe Trail. Stagecoaches regularly made stops at the following points between Las Vegas and Santa Fe: Tecolote, San Jose, Pajarito Springs, Pigeon's Ranch, Johnson's Ranch, and the Rock Corral. "Pigeon's Ranch" was reported the largest stop along the Santa Fe Trail from Las Vegas to Santa Fe.⁵¹ In 1879, one stage traveler changed horses there and wrote one of the first histories of the battle, including a questionable interview with "old Mr. Valle, or 'Pigeon,' as he is called."⁵² That Hebert built the outlying fencing and corrals, across the creek, for the stage operation or if they existed during Pigeon's ownership is unknown at this time. Nor is it known whether outbuildings stood during the early 1860s on the opposite side of the Santa Fe Trail, though Colyer's sketch suggests they did not.⁵³

The best graphic documentation of "Pigeon's Ranch" was during Hebert's ownership, just after the peak of wagon train use during the construction of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad over Glorieta Pass (completed January 1880). In June 1880, Santa Fe photographer Ben Wittick took a series of images of the Glorieta Battlefield and "Pigeon's Ranch" structures. By that time, the stage line had stopped operation, but freight wagons still appear in the photographs.

Wittick took an overview photograph of the complex looking southwest. The main house forms a square with courtyard. A tree grows in the courtyard. The shed roof has four large chimneys on the front rooms, but only one chimney on each wing. Attached to the main house are a flat roofed rear structure, adobe, and a gable roofed structure, the granaries. The surrounding compound with its adobe wall to the west encloses storage areas and stables.

Across the Santa Fe Trail from Pigeon's Ranch house is a row of one-story adobe structures, one with a saloon sign out front, that catered to travelers and railroad construction workers. Further west across the Glorieta Creek is a wooden fenced enclosure for a corral, probably for the stage company horses. Hebert was also postmaster for the small community of La Glorieta and one of the buildings, or more likely the inn, served as post office. With the completion of the railroad these businesses and the post office migrated to the new railroad station of Glorieta, two miles west.⁵⁴

Today's (2008) remaining "Pigeon's Ranch" three room adobe structure is the western portion of the 1880 complex's main house front. The photographs show the

⁵¹ Taylor, *First Mail West*, p. 180.

⁵² A. A. Hayes, *New Colorado and the Santa Fe Trail* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1880), p. 158. Hayes gives Valle a part German and part French accent in his quotes. His chapter, "An Unwritten Episode of the Late War," first appeared in the *International Review*.

⁵³ Most accounts by stage coach travelers fail to mention Pigeon's Ranch; for example, see Mary Barnard Aguirre, "It was All a Wonder to Me," in Ruth B. Moynihan, Susan Armitage, and Christine Fischer Dichamp, eds., *So Much to be Done, Women Settlers on the Mining and Ranching Frontier*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska press, 1998, second edition), pp. 249-50, 1860s; J. H. Beadle, *The Undeveloped West* (Philadelphia: National Publishing, 1873), p. 448 for 1872; *Letters of Ernst Kohlberg, 1875-1877*, Walter L. Kohlberg, translator (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1973), p. 15; Blandina Segale, *At the End of the Santa Fe Trail* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico press, 1999 reprint of 1932 edition), pp. 95-6 for 1865. Hayes, *Santa Fe Trail*, pp. 158-9, mentions the ranch as stage stop, but provides no detail.

⁵⁴ Hebert was appointed postmaster January 6, 1875 of the new "La Glorieta" post office and served until 1880 when it was removed to Glorieta, the town at the nearby train station. Records of the Appointment of Post masters, New Mexico, 1832-1970, Post Office Department, Record Group 28, National Archives and Record Service, entries for San Miguel County, microfilm roll 85.

main house with elongated facade facing the road, while a north wing serves as part of the enclosure for the yard. The front building has a shed roof that extends beyond the south wall which creates a porch supported by twelve posts. Snow is a factor near the pass which may explain the shed roof, but more likely this is a result of available timber and the traditional architecture practices brought from the Missouri. Four substantial adobe chimneys appear along the roof line. Nine openings, doors and windows, line the newly whitewashed or plastered front. The porch or *galerie* is closed in by railings. A sign with a spread eagle among banners hangs from a wooden post in front of the building. The 1869 sketch by Colyer of a main house fronting the road is confirmed by Wittick's 1880 photographs.

Wittick photographs also show the crude nature of some of the outbuildings. The corrals adjacent to Sharpshooters Ridge were rough log shed-like structures. Rough pole fencing was mixed in with white picket fencing. The appearance of finer building materials probably shipped in by freight wagon via the Santa Fe Trail vs. the rough cut local materials is evident throughout the complex.

With the completion of the railroad across Glorieta Pass and into Santa Fe on February 9, 1880, and beyond Albuquerque, in April 1880, the use of Pigeon's Ranch greatly changed. The stage line stopped operation into Santa Fe on January 24, 1880, and wagon freight teams were no longer needed for the long haul over the pass.⁵⁵ Hebert was probably out of business by the end of 1880 and he returned to farming in the Pecos valley. In his later years, he was noticed in newspapers, a veteran and old "Indian fighter," one of the Santa Fe Trail pioneers. By 1887, he had sold "Pigeon's Ranch."⁵⁶

Walter Taber's Homestead at "Pigeon's Ranch"

Arthur B. Wadleigh, in his published reminiscence, recalled that his cousin Walter M. Taber, ca. 1886, "bought the old Pigeon ranch at Glorieta."⁵⁷ Taber and Wadleigh began ranching the area and staked homestead claims. On August 4, 1891, Taber received patent to the 160 acre homestead that included Pigeon's Ranch. Taber and family lived there off and on for nearly thirty years. According to the 1910 census, fifty-one year old, Illinois-born Walter Taber lived in the ranch with his wife Martha and son Walter, Jr. He raised livestock, farmed the bottoms and served as area postmaster. His "Glorieta Mercantile and Livestock Co." raised sheep in the area as well as in western Sandoval county. Period photos ca. 1910 show a sign attached to the Pigeon Ranch house porch which advertises the "Glorieta Post Office and Store."⁵⁸

The homestead file does not provide detailed descriptions of the improvements ca. 1890, but Wadleigh described it in his recollections. The "Pigeon's Ranch" included

⁵⁵ *Weekly New Mexican*, January 31, 1880; Taylor, *First Mail West*, p. 82; Adolph F. Bandelier took a wagon past Pigeon's in August 1880 and makes no mention of it, see *The Southwestern Journals of Adolph F. Bandelier, 1880-1882*, Charles H. Lange and Carroll L. Riley, eds. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1966); similarly example railroad traveler C. M. Chase only mentions the scenery of Glorieta in C. M. Chase, *The Editor's Run in New Mexico and Colorado* (Fort David, Texas: Frontier Book Co., 1968 reprint of 1882 edition).

⁵⁶ *New Mexican* May 9, 1889, December 14, 1895, December 1, 1896.

⁵⁷ Quitclaim Deed, George Hebert to William B. Tabor, June 4, 1887, Book 30, page 570, San Miguel County Records, New Mexico State Records and Archives, Santa Fe.

⁵⁸ 1910 census enumeration sheet on Ancestry.com; Martha Taber was listed as a widow in the 1920 census; *New Mexican* July 12, 1908; Taber was appointed postmaster August 25, 1906 of the Glorieta post office and served until 1918. Records of the Appointment of Post Masters, New Mexico, 1832-1970, Post Office Department, Record Group 28, National Archives and Record Service, entries for Santa Fe County, microfilm roll 85.

a big adobe house about a hundred feet long with two wings of fifty or more feet, with a high adobe wall and stables in the rear. In the middle of the building was a patio in which were several trees; this had a porch on the three sides after the Mexican manner. Along the front of the house was a wide porch on the road.⁵⁹

Wadleigh also romanticized about Pigeon's as a hideout for desperate characters – the place “was the scene of many battles both with the Indians (Apache) and with the outlaws...had a bad name as being the rendezvous of gamblers and other tough characters; many a man was killed for what he had and his body thrown out in the mountains.”⁶⁰

Travel accounts of the period also mention the stop at the Glorieta Post Office. A. L. Westgard drove the “Old Trails Road,” a roughly designated motor route from the Midwest to California. In 1913 he drove over Glorieta Pass, “via old Pidgeon [*sic.*] Ranch, now Glorieta post office, and an old-time tavern.”⁶¹

A series of photographs taken ca. 1890s-1910s show that the ranch complex slowly deteriorated. By the 1910s all but the front rooms collapsed during Taber's tenure. The rear wings have their roof and part of their walls collapsed. The rear portion of the main house square is removed. The adobe wall to the west remains but the rough log sheds appear to have collapsed. All the outbuildings across the wagon road have disappeared as well. Though the building continued as a dwelling, post office and store, it is obvious its outbuildings and wings were collapsing beyond recognition.⁶²

Part of the collapse may have been part of salvage efforts. In 1909, the Santa Fe Railroad built the El Ortiz Harvey House hotel at Lamy. An article in a Las Vegas, New Mexico newspaper describes how the company acquired historic furnishings and collectibles to put in the hotel. Many of these came from the Glorieta area. Also, the hotel incorporated historic materials – beams (*vigas*), lattias, 12 foot wide fire hearth, and crude porch posts – from an unnamed historic ranch hacienda. A review of contemporary newspapers published in Santa Fe and Las Vegas failed to find mention of the salvaging of a historic ranch for the Lamy hotel, but historic photographs show that the east half of the Pigeon's Ranch alone remained standing and useable, new squared timber beams had replaced the crude post beams along the front of the building, the substantial center chimney was gone, and the east half of the building in collapse -- all of which occurred about the time of the construction of the Harvey House at Lamy. The article stated, in the El Ortiz Harvey House,

The ‘big room’ is not only a counterpart of the old ranch house, but it is an old ranch house. Weather worn beams taken from a New Mexico landmark a hundred years old, support the flat roof just as they did originally and a fire place 12 feet wide is an ancient fireplace transplanted from its original home...The hotel has a wide, floorless porch across the front, removed from an ancient New

⁵⁹ A. B. Wadleigh, “Ranching in New Mexico, 1886-1890,” *New Mexico Historical Review* 27: 1 (January 1952), p.20.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ A. L. Westgard, “Motor Routes to the California Expositions,” *Motor* (March 1915), at www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/westgard.htm

⁶² Walter, Martha, and Walter, Jr. were residents of Glenside, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania according to the 1900 census and his 1902 will (copy courtesy Marc Simmons), but were back at Pigeon's Ranch by the time of the 1910 census. See enumeration sheets in Ancestry.com. Tabor died around 1920.

Mexico ranch house and put up here, its gnarled and whittled posts and its weather stained roof supports testifying to its age.⁶³

Further research may incontrovertibly show that part of the Pigeon's Ranch house went into the El Ortiz Harvey House; it is highly probable. Unfortunately, the Lamy hotel was torn down in the 1950s.⁶⁴

Early in the twentieth century Pigeon's Ranch attracted attention by groups interested in preserving the battlefield, the graves, and marking historic sites along the Santa Fe Trail. The Daughters of the American Revolution initiated the effort to place a marker along the Santa Fe Trail near the battlefield, with Thomas Catron, soon to be New Mexico's first U. S. Senator, selecting a site for the marker near the Glorieta railroad station.⁶⁵ Plans for erecting a stone monument with a carved scene of cavalry attacking cannon was proposed as well. The Santa Fe railroad lawyer and historian Ralph Twitchell was instrumental in having this large stone marker placed at the Glorieta station as well.⁶⁶

A 1908 proposal to create a national park of the battlefield failed to pass the U. S. Congress.⁶⁷ In 1910, the Santa Fe *New Mexican* also editorialized that the Glorieta site should be dedicated a state park: "New Mexico should reserve the battlefield of Glorieta for such a purpose and erect thereon a monument to the heroes of that great battle, the most sanguinary and important fought in the Southwest....this field...is ideally located for a great park."⁶⁸ Though nothing came of this initiative, it did show a desire to preserve the site and probably saved Pigeon's Ranch from total demolition.

Thomas Greer's "Pigeon's Ranch" Roadside Attraction

In 1926, a Pecos valley cowboy, Thomas Greer, bought the Pigeon's Ranch from the widow of Walter Taber and moved in his family. Greer was born in Woodruff, Apache County, Arizona in 1882. He established the "Cowboy Park" in Juarez, Mexico, then lived in El Paso until moving to the Pecos Valley at Onava in 1914. The 1920 census found him residing along the Pecos at San Jose, twenty miles downstream from Glorieta. He was a widower with two young children, but remarried in 1921 when planning to move to Pigeon's Ranch.⁶⁹

Historic photographs show that he removed most of the debris from the collapsed wings and outbuildings and renovated the western half of the front of Pigeon's ranch house into his three room residence, the present (2008) three room structure. The breezeway between the two halves of the original ranch building, became the eastern

⁶³ *Weekly Optic and Livestock Grower* (Las Vegas), October 29, 1910.

⁶⁴ Arnold Berke, *Mary Colter, Architect of the Southwest* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002), pp. 77-81.

⁶⁵ *Weekly Optic and Live Stock Grower*, Las Vegas, July 2, December 10, 1910. This marker is (in 2007) 100 feet east of the station between the dirt road and railroad tracks.

⁶⁶ New Mexico Historical Society resolution, May 24, 1919, in Glorieta Battlefield file, Museum of New Mexico; "Monument for Glorieta Battle Field," *El Palacio* (October 1, 1923), pp. 133-6. This marker no longer stands.

⁶⁷ Resolution for creating national park at battle ground at Glorieta, New Mexico, House Resolution 11795, 60th Congress, 1st Session, 1908; in 1907 Coloradans had placed a stone monument in the capitol grounds, Denver, dedicated to the Civil War heroes and called for preservation of Glorieta, *Rocky Mountain News*, Denver, October 10, 1907.

⁶⁸ Quote from *New Mexican*, Santa Fe, April 23, 1910, p. 1, 3; also see April 21, 1910, 1:4.

⁶⁹ 1920 and 1930 census enumeration sheets in Ancestry.com; Greer died in the Las Vegas hospital February 2, 1968, see his obituary in the *Las Vegas Optic*, February 6, 1968, p. 1 and 4; Andrew Young files, Pecos National Historical Park; Brigida Blais, "Glorieta Pass: Gateway to the Past," 2007, ms. 543, Pecos National Historical Park.

room of the three room structure, which confused later owners who tried to stabilize Greer's poorly constructed rear wall. The new gable roof appears to be covered with inexpensive rolled roofing material. The three front door openings and windows are the same today (2008) as when Greer stabilized the building. It appears also that an isolated remnant of the back of the northeast wing remained, which he re-roofed. Photographs also show he stabilized the adobe wall along the western part of the old compound, adding gun ports for effect.

At first, he ran a few cattle and operated a store, like Taber, but the improvement of the all but abandoned Santa Fe Trail into a part of the national highway system during the 1910s-20s, especially the opening of Route 66 in 1926 to his front door, prompted Thomas Greer to convert "Pigeon's Ranch" into a roadside attraction.⁷⁰ A visitor log book with a beginning entry of July 14, 1928, indicates the number of visitors willing to pay the 25 cents to visit attraction, museum, curio shop.⁷¹ It also suggests that July 1928 was the beginning date of the full-blown roadside "museum" inside the probable newly constructed perimeter fence. Photographs of the Greer ranch attraction appeared in the February 1929 *National Geographic* and in the *New Mexico Highway Journal*, later *New Mexico* magazine, December 1929 issue, advertising the "old" ranch as a worthwhile stop.⁷²

When Greer moved his family out of the building into a new home across the road is unknown, but the Pigeon's Ranch structure was used solely as museum, curio shop by the late 1920s. Historic photographs show the building had a small shed addition built on the northeast corner allowing entry into the now fenced in back yard. People paid 25 cents to visit the "Old Hospital" (a remnant of the original building), the "old cave," "old post office," "old walls," "old Spanish fort," all parts of or remnants of the original Pigeons Ranch compound. Greer also operated a gas station and garage, and sold water from the "oldest well" across the road. On the exterior was an array of signage. The building's east end was covered with poorly rendered signs that announced that road traveler's had arrived at "Glorieta Pass, Old Pigeon's Ranch, Most Historic Spot on Santa Fe Trail, Old Glorieta Battle Field." Atop the roof extending into the road, a sign announced "This is Glorieta Pass."⁷³

The only early interior photograph of the building was made ca. 1929 during Greer's operation. It shows plastered walls with fireplaces along the wall. The plaster has been marked up with sayings, poetry, brands, and an odd assortment of stories written in black paint or charcoal. The walls are covered with artifacts, skins and antlers, and skulls.

⁷⁰ Not until 1942 did Greer sign over an easement for the road in front of Pigeon's Ranch, see Grant of Easement to State of New Mexico by Thomas Greer, January 17, 1942, filed Book of Deeds 24, p. 634, Santa Fe County; Martha Taber had sold a more limited road easement in 1922, filed Book 10 of Deeds, p. 29, both in Santa Fe County Recorder's Office. The WPA guide gave further endorsement of the roadside attraction by including a description: "Field headquarters for the Union forces was at Pidgin's ranch, also called Pigeon's... owned and operated by Alex Valle, a Frenchman who cut fancy 'pigeon's wings' at dances. The old adobe ranch house is still standing, and the adobe corral with its port holes [sic.] is just east of a steep rocky bluff that projects out toward the highway," Works Projects Administration, *New Mexico a Guide to a Colorful State* (New York: Hastings House, 1940), p. 241.

⁷¹ Old Pigeon's Ranch Visitors Attendance Records, Collection number AC 276-p, Fray Angélico Chávez History Library, the Palace of the Governors, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe.

⁷² Frederick Simpich, "The Santa Fe Trail, Path to Empire," *National Geographic* 56, no. 2 (1929), p. 245, a photo shows Greer sitting inside the main ranch house with bear hides, hand-written cowboy poetry on the walls, and other western paraphernalia; Joseph and Helen Masters, "Tracing the Old Santa Fe Trail," *New Mexico Highway Journal* 7, no. 12 (1929), p. 20.

⁷³ Thomas Greer, *Historical Facts About the Old Battle Grounds and Old Indian and Spanish Trading Post at Glorieta Pass (Old Pigeon Ranch) on the Santa Fe Trail* (n.p., n.d., ca. 1927), is a pamphlet description of attractions, Vertical files, Donnelly Library, Highlands University, copy in Young file, Pecos NHP.

Greer worked with the Texas Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy to mark the battlefield during this period, but failed to select a site for a marker within his compound. Instead, the group worked with the U. S. Forests Service to donate 2 acres to the Museum of New Mexico, which provided the site on the historic battlefield, a half mile east of Pigeon's ranch, for a stone marker. Dedicated in 1939, the marker became part of the 2 acre Glorieta State Monument, which was minimally managed by the new state agency.⁷⁴

With the relocation of Route 66 away from Santa Fe (and Pigeon's Ranch) in 1937 and because of limitations to travel during World War II, Greer all but closed the Pigeon's ranch attraction. With the 1950s realignment of US 85 away from Pigeon's Ranch the attraction was closed. According to an interview that Andrew Young conducted with his son Bill Greer in January 1998, and to notes from Tom Greer's diary, the senior Greer and his family lived at Pigeon's Ranch until they moved into the Kozlowski Trading Post site, part of Tex Austin's nearby ranch. Tom Greer continued to live at the Kozlowski place almost until his death February 2, 1968.⁷⁵

Travelers during the post-war years noted the dilapidated condition of the by then considered tacky roadside attraction. As NPS historian Robert Utley noted in early 1959, "At Pigeon's Ranch, focal point of the battle between the main contending forces [at the battle at Glorieta], part of the original adobe ranch house and corral are still standing. Its owner, however, has decked it with a multitude of signs proclaiming it an 'old Spanish fort,' and charges admission to it and to the 'oldest well in the U.S.A.'" ⁷⁶ The three rooms' adobe walls were in need of plastering, the roll roofing had blown off showing bare board cover, which leaked, and doors were unhinged. Vandals had become a problem. Questions about the authenticity of the site and its attractions brought criticism.⁷⁷

Finally, the new construction of a "super highway" over Glorieta Pass in the late 1950s caused the demolition of Johnson's ranch, regrading of the landscape through Apache Canyon and destruction of battle sites, which brought an outcry from preservationists. In 1959, in response to constituents, New Mexico U. S. Senator Dennis Chavez asked the National Park Service to evaluate the site of the Battle of Glorieta and consider it for National Monument status. The National Park Service sent historians to do a study of Glorieta battlefield's historic significance.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ For an overview history see Sean Reines, "The Preservation and Interpretation of the Civil War Battle at Glorieta Pass, New Mexico," M. A. Thesis, Middle Tennessee State University, May 2002.

⁷⁵ Notes from interview with Bill Greer by Andrew Young, January 13, 1998, copy Young file, Pecos NHP; the 1930 census, however, shows 47 year old Tom Greer, curios store owner, as residing at Pigeon's Ranch with 26 year old wife Stella and children Tola, Ina and Billy; the 1920 census lists Greer as a widower living with son Tom, Jr. and daughter Tola down the Pecos River at San Jose, New Mexico. Census Enumeration sheets on Ancestry.com. Greer died in the Las Vegas hospital, see *Optic*, February 6, 1968, p. 1 and 4.

⁷⁶ Robert Utley, "Glorieta Battlefield," March 1959, Glorieta Battlefield National Historic Landmark file, National Park Service, Santa Fe; William E. Brown, *The Santa Fe Trail* (St. Louis, MO: Patrice Press, 1988), p. 159.

⁷⁷ Most of the criticism was aimed at the claim of the "oldest well" or "Coronado's well," see B. A. Reuter interview with Teodosio Ortiz, Octaviano Segura, and Charles Erickson, Pecos, NM, April 28, 1939, "Old Well on Pigeon ranch," ms, Federal Writer's Project, Library of Congress, copy at Pecos National Historical Park, and B.A. Reuter, "Corrections to my manuscript on the Pigeon Ranch Well now owned and advertised by Mr. Tom Greer as the oldest well in the U.S.A.," File Number WPA 5-5-52 #47, WPA New Mexico Collection, 1936-1940, AC 228, Fray Angélico Chávez History Library, Palace of the Governors, Santa Fe; Glorieta Battlefield National Historic Landmark file, National Park Service, Santa Fe.

⁷⁸ Burt Schmitz to Hugh Miller, NPS, April 11, 1959, Steve Long to Senator Ralph Yarborough, July 29, 1959, Senator Dennis Chavez to Conrad Wirth, NPS, August 4, 1959, Jackson Price, NPS, to Senator Chavez, August 14, 1959, Roy E Appleman, Draft Report on the "Battle of Glorieta," n.d., ms., all in Glorieta Battlefield National Historic Landmark microfiche files, National Park Service, Santa Fe.

Recent Preservation Efforts at Pigeon's Ranch⁷⁹

On November 5, 1961, after a report by National Park Service historian Robert Utley, the Glorieta Battlefield site, including Pigeon's Ranch, was recognized as one of New Mexico's first designated National Historic Landmarks.⁸⁰ Concern about the site's preservation coincided with the centennial of the Civil War. Over the 1960s decade, a Civil War symposium was held at the nearby Baptist Glorieta Conference Center; re-enactors met at the site, tours were given, an investigation about the integrity of the site was completed by Utley for the National Park Service; and a number of books were published or reprinted about the war in New Mexico.⁸¹ However, Pigeon's Ranch continued to deteriorate and be vandalized while people dug the surrounding ground looking for Civil War artifacts.

In 1971, a wealthy Dallas couple, William and Joyce Mahan, leased with an option to buy the Greer 160 acres. The lease included the agreement to restore the Pigeon Ranch and create an historic site of the battlefield. The agreement stated that Mahan was to "restore the roof of the old building [which] shall be made with vigas and a flat roof." This was never done. Mahan hired architect James S. Lynch to do a preliminary drawing for the possible reconstruction of the 23 room complex and outbuildings, corrals and fences. Lynch, an instructor at Montana State University spending the summer in a commune near Glorieta, prepared site plans. While limited trenching was conducted November – December 1971 to estimate the extent of the buildings and fences the site plan drawing showed much that was later proven incorrect. Mahan also cleared the Greer era developments, fences, houses, signage, and debris. The work on the Pigeon's ranch building included patching the roofing and removing most of the Greer-era shed addition on the northeast corner. His crew also rebuilt the two fire places, the wall in the back of the east room, and patched exterior mud.⁸²

Mahan, as owner of D-Tex Electronics, was also inventor and manufacturer of a metal detector. He used it to collect items from the battlefield for the proposed museum. His plans were stalled by the inability to convince the state highway department to relocate the road (State Route 50) away from the building, stating "I suppose we will just hold off on construction until this is determined." By 1974, because of health concerns

⁷⁹ Reines, "The Preservation of Glorieta Pass," p. 249.

⁸⁰ Copy of the nomination is in the Glorieta Battlefield National Historic Landmark file, National Park Service, Santa Fe and included here in the appendix. The NPS regional director handed the NHL certificate to the Museum of New Mexico director during a Civil War Centennial conference at Glorieta Baptist Camp, March 25, 1962. In the summer of 1963, the Museum of New Mexico placed the brass NHL plaque on a boulder just north of the 1939 stone monument on the battlefield, but it was stolen sometime in mid-1972. During this period, the state highway department erected nearby one of its historic wayside panels, later relocated west of Pigeon's Ranch near "Windmill Hill."

⁸¹ Copy of the March 1962 conference program, organized by the Civil War Centennial Committee of New Mexico, Franz Scholes, Calvin Horn, W. A. Keleher, Frank Reeve and others, is at Western History Room, Denver Public Library; Robert Utley, "Report on the Integrity of Glorieta Battlefield," National Park Service, Santa Fe, 1961; news clippings about the events are in the Glorieta Battlefield NHL microfiche files, NPS, Santa Fe; one group proposed erecting a towering monument to the Texans at the top of the Glorieta Pass, see Gertrude Harris Cook to Governor Connally, n.d. (ca. 1962), Glorieta Battlefield NHL microfiche, NPS, Santa Fe.

⁸² Reines, "Preservation of Glorieta," p. 262-3; Copy of lease agreement, Nathan Greer and William Mahan, October 8, 1971, filed December 20, 1971, Book 287, Misc. Docs., p. 310, copy courtesy Marc Simmons, Cerrillos, New Mexico – Nathan Greer kept rights to the family cemetery on the land; *New Mexican*, November 7, 1971, p. D1; Oakes, *Pigeon's Ranch*, p. 85; Wilson, "Archeology," p. 5 and appended James Lynch plan; John Wilson to Stanley Hordes, State Historian, October 26, 1984, Pigeon Ranch file, Cultural Properties Review Committee collection, State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe; Bob McCoy to Marc Simmons, October 11, 17, and November 15, 1983, letters courtesy Marc Simmons; James S. "Jay" Lynch, Bayfield, Colorado to author September 24, 2007; William Mahan to Al Schroeder, NPS, November 5, 1971, Pigeon Ranch file, SR-92, Historic Preservation Division, State of New Mexico.

and being disappointed by the lack of support from the history community and intransigence at the highway department, the Mahans stopped work. He died the fall of 1978. In 1978, Mahan's lawyer Julian Burttram of Santa Fe acquired the property and began plans to subdivide and sell off parcels of the original homestead within the battlefield, including Pigeon's Ranch.⁸³

During the 1970s a group of New Mexicans, who held a reenactor "encampment" in 1977, became concerned about the fate of the site, especially the subdivision of the battlefield by Burttram and continued deterioration of the building. When news of the proposed construction of a trailer park at the battlefield became known, New Mexico historian Marc Simmons called for the donation of funds to help buy and save the site.⁸⁴ Santa Fe banker Eugene Jones and his wife Eloisa stepped in and bought ten acres around Pigeon's ranch and asked Simmons for guidance. They also worked with the State Historic Preservation office for technical advice, which correctly advised them against reconstruction as proposed by Mahan. They also funded patch work on the roof (90 pound felt rolled roofing) and the October 1980 introducing of 40 yards of clean fill for backfilling around the house's eroding foundation and base. Unfortunately, a divorce and ill health forced Eloisa to sell the property before work could begin on restoring the buildings.⁸⁵

Simmons then helped a Santa Fe shop owner, Linda Frye acquire the ten acres of the ranch. Retired NPS chief historian Bob Utley, by then a resident of Santa Fe, and his wife Melody Webb, National Park Service regional historian in Santa Fe, advised Marc Simmons, Don Albert, and others to organize a Glorieta battlefield preservation group, which they did, finally incorporating as the Glorieta Battlefield Preservation Society, Inc. Working with the new owner of Pigeon's, Linda Frye and her daughter Cindy Conklin, they helped with the donation of a twenty year preservation easement of the three acres around Pigeon's Ranch to the state of New Mexico's Historic Preservation Bureau on October 2, 1981.⁸⁶

Tom Merlan, State Historic Preservation Officer and head of the state Historic Preservation Bureau (now Historic Preservation Division), helped the group raise state funds to match their donated funds to prepare for the preservation of Pigeon's ranch. In February 1981, the preservation group's architect Vic Johnson agreed to prepare basic design plans for a new roof, stabilized walls and foundation. Builder Mac Watson was hired to prepare estimates to stabilize the adobe structure. An estimated \$5,000 was needed, which Merlan sought through the federal Historic Preservation Fund. Simmons

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Marc Simmons to Friends of History, January 22, 1979 copy courtesy Marc Simmons; *New Mexican* January 28, 1979; the Historical Society of New Mexico agreed to establish a subcommittee and account to manage the Pigeon's Ranch preservation funds, Marc Simmons to author, September 6, 2007.

⁸⁵ Thomas W. Merlan to Gene Jones, March 30, and August 2, 1979, Pigeon's Ranch file, Cultural Properties Review Committee collection, State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe; T. Gene Jones to Lee Myers, March 12, 1979, Eloise Brown Jones to Marc Simmons, October 22, November 10, 1980, and February 15, 1981, courtesy Marc Simmons; Jones received a small Historic Preservation Fund matching grant to help fund the work, "Pigeon's Ranch Final Report" no date (c. 1980), copy Pigeon's Ranch file, HPD; Johnson-Nestor architects had proposed developing preservation documents for the Joneses, but the project was not funded, Robert L. Nestor to Thomas Merlan, May 10, 1979, Pigeon's Ranch file, HPD.

⁸⁶ Reines, "Preservation of Glorieta," p. 268, much of his information is from the State Historic Preservation Division files; Robert Utley to Marc Simmons, August 15, 1981, Pigeon's Ranch file, HPD; John Robertson, "Civil War Site turned over to State," *Santa Fe Reporter*, October 7, 1981; Don Alberts presentation, Glorieta Symposium, March 24, 2007, Pecos NHP; James Abar, "The New Battle for Pigeon's Ranch," *Impact, Albuquerque Journal*, October 11, 1983, pp. 4-7, 15; because of business reverses Linda Frye moved her shop to Charlottesville, Virginia and sold Pigeon's Ranch, Marc Simmons to author September 6, 2007, and Linda Frye, Charlottesville, Virginia, to Marc Simmons, April 14, 1985.

sought donations to match the grant and convinced the historical society, as a nonprofit entity, to manage the funds.⁸⁷

The biggest challenge the preservation group faced was the collapse of part of the rear wall in April 1983. Water had seeped in and damaged the base of the wall, essentially the eastern half, that Mahan had built to plug the back of the original breezeway in the 1970s, and which Jones had had repaired in 1980, but now failed. A meeting on site with Simmons, a representative for Tom Merlin, Mac Watson, and Vic Johnson came up with a plan of actions:

- 1) An archeologist would do tests and monitor work,
- 2) The existing foundation would be used but an 8" bond beam of new re-enforced concrete would be poured on top of the original stone foundation.
- 3) The adobe wall would be rebuilt using as much of the original adobe as possible and with the introduction of new adobe, 2 standard bricks thick in basket weave pattern.
- 4) The rear would be regraded in order to create a new drainage away from the structure.

Marc Simmons recalls that while he beat the bushes for donations, Tom Merlan helped to get Federal Emergency Job Act funds, \$10,000, to hire a stabilization crew led by Mac Watson. They dug down to the stone foundation and covered it with concrete. The rear adobe wall was replaced with stabilized adobe brick, they rebuilt the fireplace, and the roof was rebuilt and covered with 90 lb. rolled roofing during 1983-4 (see Appendix).⁸⁸

The state highway department also built a guard rail in front of the structure, which is situated within the highway easement.⁸⁹ A study of the seismic impact of road traffic on the building was completed which suggested vehicles caused vibrations that damaged the structure. The US Geological Survey report suggested moving the road at least 10 feet -- 75 feet would be better -- away from the structure. The highway department initiated plans to relocate the road and reported it would start work by the spring of 1988. This was not done.⁹⁰

The preservation group, especially Don Alberts and new member Michael Pitel of the state Tourism Bureau, also encouraged use of the site for re-enactors. In the spring of 1984, they met with members of the Albuquerque encampment and convinced them to re-enact the Battle of Glorieta the following June, during Father's Day weekend. What began as a small gathering of Civil War buffs in 1984 expanded as an annual event to

⁸⁷ Marc Simmons to author September 6, 2007; Reines, "Preserving Glorieta," 268-275; Mac Watson, Builder, "Report on Pigeon Ranch, Glorieta, New Mexico," February 25, 1983, courtesy Marc Simmons; Vic Johnson, Johnson-Nestor, architects, Pigeon Ranch plans, 1983, copy at Chavez Library, Museum of New Mexico.

⁸⁸ Mac Watson to author, October 15, 2007; NHL file, NPS, Santa Fe; Marc Simmons, "Saving Pigeon's Ranch," *The Santa Fe Reporter*, April 20, 1983; Maria Higuera, "Wall of Historic Adobe Collapses," *Journal North*, Albuquerque, April 9, 1983; Howard Bryan, "Civil War Landmark Falling Down," *Albuquerque Tribune*, April 16, 1983; James Abarr, "The New Battle for Pigeon's Ranch," *Impact, Albuquerque Journal*, October 11, 1983, pp. 4-7, 15; "Emergency at Pigeon's Ranch on the Glorieta Battlefield," *Cronica de Nuevo Mexico* (New Mexico Historical Society newsletter), May 1983, p. 1; Marc Simmons, "Pigeon's Ranch Progress Report," *Cronica de Nuevo Mexico* (New Mexico Historical Society newsletter), March 1984, p. 1; Linda Gegeck to Linda Frye, April 21, 1983, Pigeon's Ranch file, HPD.

⁸⁹ The date of the construction of the guard rail is uncertain, but is believed to have been in the early 1980s. Simmons to author, September 6, 2007.

⁹⁰ K. W. King and S. T. Algemissen, U. S. Geological Survey, "Seismic-Hazard Inspection of the Glorieta Battlefield National Historic Landmark," 1984, courtesy Marc Simmons; Peter Eichstaedt, "Road Rumbles, Ranch Crumbles," *New Mexican* May 17, 1984; Susan Basquin, "The Battle for a Civil War Shrine," *Santa Fe Reporter*, August 5, 1987; Governor Toney Anaya to Michael Mullin, Civil War Round Table, January 13, 1986 reported that the highway department had scheduled the relocation of the highway; Oakes' compliance document was completed that year as well; Right of Way maps of SR50 new location, New Mexico State Department of Transportation, Santa Fe, copies courtesy Ed Vasquez, NMDOT.

include by 1987 nearly two hundred re-enactors watched by an estimated six thousand visitors. Such increased public attention brought a louder call for the preservation of the site.⁹¹

At the same time the New Mexico state legislature provided funds for a feasibility study that looked at alternatives for long term preservation and protection of the site. The state Historic Preservation Division contracted with Santa Fe Planning Associates to prepare the report, completed in July 1985. They hired John Wilson to do archeological work during November 1984. His report provides a brief historical overview and through field probing outlined the extent of the Pigeon's Ranch compound. The work was limited and only used to prove the extent of the complex, but was the first sound study of the importance and place of Pigeon's Ranch during the 1862 conflict.⁹²

Following a near fatal automobile accident in 1986, Marc Simmons became less active, but was replaced as president of the preservation group by Don Alberts, another strong preservation advocate. However, their work was refocused away from the building. What became the "Second Battle of Glorieta" followed the June 1987 discovery of 31 Confederate soldiers' skeletons during the construction of a new home across the road and southeast of Pigeon's.⁹³ The first legislation to incorporate the battlefield into the National Park system was hurriedly introduced that August, which prompted a National Park Service study.⁹⁴

But the unprotected nature of Pigeon's Ranch was revealed in 1989 when vandals bored holes in the adobe walls looking for treasure. Volunteers again came to the building's aid and patched the holes.⁹⁵ The matter of passing legislation was one of when, not if. The Conservation Fund, a Virginia-based organization acquired the property, as well as other Civil War sites, in 1990 in anticipation of legislation passing Congress. On June 27, 1990, Pecos National Historical Park was designated, and the following November 8 the Glorieta Battlefield unit was added to the park.⁹⁶

The National Park Service signed a lease agreement with the Conservation Fund September 21, 1990, and eventually acquired Pigeon's Ranch, December 4, 1992. The site remains undeveloped. Crews continue to maintain the moth-balled structure, secure it from vandalism, and work to eliminate drainage problems caused by the flattened mounds of adobe walls of the one-time substantial complex.

⁹¹ Michael Pitel to author, September 26, 2007; Michael E. Pitel, "Refighting the 1862 Battle of Glorieta," *Sunset Magazine*, June 1986, p. 40; Reenactment clippings file, Marc Simmons, Cerrillos, New Mexico; Pitel stated that the 125th anniversary of Gettysburg drew the re-enactors to Pennsylvania, so, there was no event at Pigeon's Ranch in 1988. Subsequently, the re-enactors have held a "Civil War Weekend" each May at Los Golandrinas living history museum near Santa Fe.

⁹² Santa Fe Planning Associates, "Feasibility Study for Pigeon's Ranch, Glorieta Pass Battlefield, New Mexico," Santa Fe, New Mexico, July 1985; John P. Wilson, "Archeological Investigations at Pigeon's Ranch, New Mexico," Santa Fe, December 1984; Interview by author with John Wilson, Las Cruces, August 21, 2007. A reconnaissance survey of the battlefield was conducted in 2005, but a thorough investigation is still a critical need. Douglas D. Scott, "Detecting Glorieta: A Metal Detecting Archeological Reconnaissance of Glorieta Battlefield, Pigeon's Ranch Sub-Unit, Pecos National Historical Park, New Mexico," ms., NPS, Midwest Archeological Center, Lincoln, Nebraska, 2005.

⁹³ On June 23, 1987, the remains of 31 Confederate soldiers (ranging in age from 17 to 42) of the 4th, 5th, and 7th Regiments of the Texas Mounted Volunteers, who were killed or died as a result of wounds during the Battle of Glorieta, were found on the Siler property. Three soldiers were identified and re-interred in separate graves. A monument honors these Confederate soldiers who were re-interred at the Santa Fe National Cemetery on April 25, 1993. The remains of 28 Confederate soldiers who could not be identified are buried in Section K, Grave 330C. Glorieta Battlefield file, Chaves library, Museum of New Mexico.

⁹⁴ Simmons to author, September 6, 2007; Helen Muller, "Public Hearings Participants Eye Glorieta Site," *Las Vegas Optic*, January 18, 1988; Cheryle Mitchell, "The Second Battle of Glorieta," *El Palacio* 96, no. 2 (Spring 1991), 24-30; "Glorieta Battlefield, New Mexico, Briefing Data," National Park Service, Santa Fe, December 1987, p. 1.

⁹⁵ Camille Flores, "Treasure Seeking Vandals Rip Adobe Walls," *Journal North*, Albuquerque, March 3, 1989.

⁹⁶ Public Law 101-313, "Petroglyph National Monument and Pecos National Historical Park, Establishment," June 27, 1990; Public Law 101-536, "Pecos National Historical Park Expansion Act of 1990," November 8, 1990.

B. Chronology

1815

Juan de Diós Peña, Francisco Ortiz and Juan Bautista Aguilar petition for lands *west* of the league of land granted to Pecos Pueblo, including the site of future Pigeon's Ranch.

1848

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo transfers New Mexico from Mexico to United States.

1851

Monthly stage begins run from Missouri to Santa Fe along the Santa Fe Trail.

1852

Ft. Union established. Freight traffic over Santa Fe Trail between posts increases.

1852, May 31

Alexander Valle (Pigeon) buys Pena et. al. Spanish land grant claim. Lands interpreted as being *north* not west of the Pecos Pueblo grant.

Mid-1850s

Valle (Pigeon) constructs his ranch complex, freight wagon and stage station, and "house of entertainment" (inn) along the Santa Fe Trail near Glorieta Pass.

1858

Southern Overland Stage and Express begins weekly stage line from Missouri to Santa Fe; Pigeon's Ranch becomes one of the biggest stops along line.

1861

Civil War begins and southern New Mexico seized and created as Territory of Arizona, Confederate States of America

1862, March 26-8

Battle of Glorieta fought, with Pigeon's Ranch at center of March 28 battle. Confederates retreat and abandon territory.

1865

Stages increased to daily runs.

George Hebert buys Pigeon's Ranch; improves well, fencing.

Apaches attack ranch, wound Hebert.

1867

Hebert donates cemetery plot for relocating remains of Union soldiers, ¼ mile southwest of ranch house.

May 1869

Vincent Colyer sketch of Pigeon's Ranch is first to show complex.

January 1880

Santa Fe railroad completed over Glorieta Pass putting an end to the use of the Santa Fe Trail past Pigeon's Ranch.
Stage run over trail discontinued.

1880, June 2

Alexander Valle (Pigeon) dies.

1880, June

Ben Wittick photographs of the complex at its height.

Ca. 1886-8

Riddle photograph shows beginning of collapse of rear portion of Pigeon Ranch complex.

1886-7

Walter M. Taber buys Pigeon's Ranch from Hebert and files for 160 acre homestead, which is patented in 1891; Operates ranch, post office and store.

By early 1900s

Major portions of Pigeon's Ranch complex are either collapsed or salvaged; all but front portion derelict.

1908

Resolution introduced in U. S. Congress to create Glorieta Battlefield National Park.
Does not pass.

Ca. 1920

Walter Taber dies; widow Martha Taber continues to reside in the house.

1926

Route 66 designated; follows historic Santa Fe Trail past Pigeon's Ranch.

1926-8

Thomas L. Greer buys Pigeon's Ranch and cleans away debris and renovates remaining three rooms of structure into residence and then curio shop, museum. He builds a popular roadside attraction astride Route 66, with gas station, café, and new residence.

1937

Route 66 re-designated on new roadway 60 miles south, away from Pigeon's Ranch; Greer's roadside business wains.

1939, October 1

Daughters of the Confederacy, Texas Division, erect stone marker at battlefield
Becomes two acre New Mexico state monument.

1959

Senator Chaves of New Mexico requests NPS to study Glorieta battlefield for possible designation as National Monument.

1961, November 5

Glorieta Battlefield designated a National Historic Landmark.

February 2, 1968

Tom Greer dies.

1971-7

William and Joyce Mahan, lessees of the Greer property, clean up the site and remove all of Greer's developments. They maintain the three remaining rooms of Pigeon's Ranch house. They make a proposal to reconstruct the Pigeon's Ranch complex as a historic site, but abandon the project,

1978

Property sold to new owner, who subdivides the 160 acres and threatens to put a trailer park on the battlefield.

1979-1990

A series of new owners buy the 10 acres at Pigeon's Ranch and try to work with preservationists to save the building. The State Historic Preservation Office acquires 20 year easement (1981) on the building and proposes alternatives for preservation.

1983, April

The rear wall collapses, but is quickly rebuilt and the building stabilized.

1984-7

Re-enactors meet on the battlefield each June.

1987, June 23

Confederate mass grave uncovered during the construction of a new addition to a home across the road from Pigeon's Ranch.

1989

Vandals break in through adobe wall looking for treasure. Volunteers repair damage.

1990, September 21

National Park Service leases Pigeon's Ranch.

1990, November 8

Glorieta Unit added to Pecos NHP.

1992, December 30

National Park Service acquires the 10.198 acres Pigeon's Ranch house.

C. Physical Description

The Pigeon's ranch house is a one story, three room adobe structure with gable roof, 47' 9" long and 17' 6" wide, immediately adjacent State Route 50. The building has been unoccupied since the 1960s, and was in a dilapidated condition at the time of the 1990 act authorizing the Glorieta unit of the Pecos NHP. The building is the lone standing remnant of the former Pigeon's Ranch complex – the center of the Civil War Battle of Glorieta.



In 1983, the rear wall of the structure collapsed. A concrete foundation was poured under the wall and a new composite adobe wall was built. The wall was left un-plastered in order to differentiate from the historic interior finish. The exterior was covered with mud like the rest of the structure. At that time, 1983-4, the roof was replaced.



The mud veneer, which was applied to the exterior surface sometime around 1983-4, shows cracks and patch work.



NE corner



West wall showing 1983 concrete foundation



East wall

Remnants of the connection to the east "house" of the front portion of Pigeon's Ranch can be seen along the east wall. The timbers date from the 19th century design and use. This was probably the breezeway between the two structures to the courtyard.



The three windows have deteriorated to the point of total loss; the openings are now covered with wire screen for security. The windows are also covered with removable plywood most of the time. The three exterior doorways have been similarly treated with wire and plywood coverings. Evidence of paint on the east wall window trim suggests the exterior wood trim during the Greer-era was painted yellow. The door opening cadence and pattern reflect the 19th century structure as seen in historic photographs.



East wall window



South wall middle window

Remnants of a double hung window with transom can be seen in the west window on the south wall. Historic photographs show 6 over 6 double hung windows on the building through the Greer era. This window appears to be a replacement, ca. 1950. The window frame wood is probably from the 19th century, one plank being 13" wide of the overall 23" opening depth.



West window, South wall

One of the historic doors has been removed and is inside the building. It has a window with panels and probably dates from the Greer era; a historic photograph shows a similar door in the middle opening in the south wall. The two interior doorways lack doors. The layout and door openings reflect the 19th century design and use.



The structure's three rooms are approximately 14' wide and, from the east, are 8' 8", 24' 4", and 24' 9" long. The west two rooms had 1x6 wood flooring, much of which is missing, on 2 inch wide sill boards (now filled in between with dirt). The flooring is probably from the Greer era. The earlier earthen floor is underneath.



On the rear, in the middle room, is a stone fire place rebuilt during the 1983 rebuilding of the collapsed back wall. The fire place lacks a chimney or flue.



The ceiling of the structure is made up of 1 x 12s, probably of the Greer era. The west room has an opening for a stove pipe.



The gable roof of the structure was built in 1984 with 2x6s set at two foot centers. The 90 lb. roll roofing placed during the 1983-4 stabilization work is scheduled to be replaced with more historically representative wood shingles.



South side.





View of northeast corner

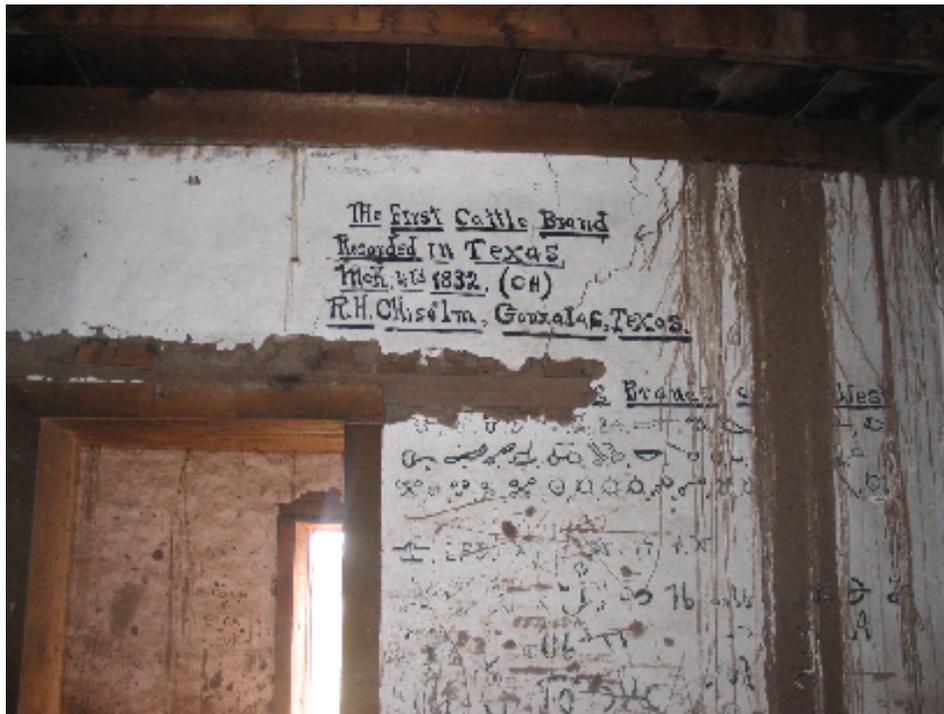


View of east side, new roof. Note, south eave shortened to meet highway request.



View of north west corner

The interior of the structure has a plaster finishing that is crumbling. The walls are covered with sayings, slogans, and advertisements from the Tom Greer curio shop era, 1920s-30s. They need to be recorded photographically to HABS standards. Preservation of the plaster is underway. The plaster may date from the 19th century.





Where men live Rags in the Desert know
and Death was nothing to Shun;
Where they Buried 'em neat, Without Preacher or
And writ on their Tombstone ^{Sheet} ^{Put Sheet} ^{Grude}
This Jasper was Slow with his Gun



West room, southeast corner. Plaster conservator at work.

Water drainage at the rear continues to be a problem. A gutter and down spots were placed on the rear roof by NPS.



Pigeon's Ranch HSR

A perimeter rock wall remains from the Greer era. It outlines, roughly, the Pigeon's Ranch era adobe wall. The present structure is roughly 1/10 the size of the historic complex.



View southwest from Sharpshooter's Ridge. Rock wall visible at right of structure.



Rear of rock wall looking west.



Rear rock wall looking east.



Northwest corner of rock wall.



Looking south along rock



Front of rock wall showing entry posts.



D. Treatment: General Discussion

At present (2008) the park has initiated several major efforts to stabilize the Pigeon's Ranch house. This is in accord with the 1996 park General Management Plan. The approved plan states that, until the issue of the location of State Route 50 is resolved, there will be limited work at the Pigeon's Ranch sub-unit;

“The battlefield will be preserved and interpreted. The Pigeon's ranch structure would be stabilized. A staffed visitor contact facility in an existing structure, interpretive exhibits, and trails near Pigeon's ranch would be developed. However, as long as NM 50 remains, limited facilities including an interpretive kiosk and a short trail would be provided but no other facilities would be developed.”

In accordance with the stabilization plan, the park began maintaining the exterior mud, introduced an improved roof runoff and drainage system, and conserved the plaster on the interior of the structure. The roofing is scheduled to be replaced in FY 08. Window openings have been covered with wire and with plywood for security reasons.

In 1999, the park contracted with Tony Crosby, an expert in adobe preservation, and Anne Oliver, expert in plaster conservation, to prepare guidance documents. Their reports guided the park on the above work, Crosby on drainage and adobe stabilization, and Oliver on the plaster work. Copies of their reports are on file at the park.

The structure still has major structural problems with the foundation, which has caused settling of the adobe walls and racking of window and door frames. Because the historic breezeway became the third or east room by infilling the breezeway opening without an adequate foundation, the eastern section of the building will require eventual major stabilization work.

The ultimate treatment for the structure is to restore the exterior to its ca. 1862 appearance. This work is hampered by the proximity of State Route 50. The structure lies within the right of way. At this time (2008), entrance to the building is blocked by the road's guard rail, less than a foot from the east doorway. Future preservation and interpretation depends greatly on the relocation of Route 50 away from the building, both to protect the structure and for visitor safety. If the road is relocated away from the battlefield, the park can be more pro-active in its restoration of the building. For example, the historic porch, if rebuilt now, would be in the modern highway's west-bound lane tarmac.

Be that as it may, the ultimate treatment selected alternative work recommends the re-use of the buildings interior for interpretation. This would provide visitor access to period interior finishes. This alternative includes architectural, structural and mechanical alterations to provide safety and comfort for park visitors.

Elements on the exterior to be restored include the roof, porch or galerie, window and door openings, and wall finishes, guided by historic data, photographs, and physical evidence. Sampling of the façade finish coats, for example, will help determine the color of the plaster finish, especially below the window sill line.

Architectural Elements Chronology and Significance

The Pigeon's Ranch house today (2008) is actually the left "house" and breezeway of the front of the Pigeon's Ranch complex built some time in the late 1850s. The structure took the present shape ca. 1926 when Tom Greer acquired the property and renovated the best portion of the remaining structure.

It appears that Greer maintained the window openings and doorways, but replaced the shed roof with a gabled roof covered with rolled felt roofing. The building was covered with mud adobe. The interior finishes of Pigeon's era, may be the same as the plaster in the present structure (analysis of a sample under the layers of mud on the façade may prove this).

Greer built a wall of adobe in the gap of the former Pigeon's Ranch house "breezeway" (south entrance) and in part of the north exit, where he built a shed addition to the house. The present east wall is the west wall of the former right or east "house" of Pigeon's 1850s Ranch house. This infill has caused the most structural problems over the years, and collapsed at least once prior to the April 1983 collapse of the back or north wall.

The collapsed material was removed and a new back wall constructed in 1983-4. At the same time, a new roof was placed on the building, down to the ceiling members. Thus, the back wall and roof are non-historic material. However, the Pigeon's Ranch house retains enough integrity to evoke the historic materials, scale, location, setting, and feel of the complex during the nineteenth century.

The structure is on its original site and is surrounded by remnants of the original complex, corral walls, and outbuildings. Historic archeology of the site in 1984 has exposed the scale and the amount of historic material from the historic scene extant today. The defining of the complex on the ground can be done by the remnants of the structure above the grade. Further archeology can provide more definitive answers about the scale and use of the Pigeon's Ranch complex.

Existing Conditions

The Pigeon's ranch house is a one story, three room adobe structure with gable roof, 47' 9" long and 17' 6" wide, immediately adjacent State Route 50. The building has been unoccupied since the 1960s, and was in a dilapidated condition at the time of the 1990 act authorizing the Glorieta unit of the Pecos NHP. Portions of the building were "stabilized" in 1971, 1980, and 1983-4, some of the work doing more damage than good.

Roofing

The 90 lb. felt roofing was placed on the building during the 1983-4 stabilization effort funded by the state and the Glorieta Battlefield Preservation Society. The roofing is in need of replacement.

Roof

The rafters and roof frame were placed on the building during the 1983-4 stabilization effort funded by the state and the Glorieta Battlefield Preservation Society. According to Tony Crosby's report, the roof appears to be in good condition.

Walls

The adobe walls are covered extensively in the report by Tony Crosby, which see. Anne Oliver discusses the interior walls in her report, which see.

Foundation

The original foundation was stone and for three fourths of the building most likely remains so. The back wall collapse brought the introduction of a reinforced concrete foundation poured 8" over the stone foundation on the rear of the building and under part of the adjoining walls.

Windows

The three windows have all deteriorated and are missing. The window box appears to retain the nineteenth century wood as well as remnants of the window frames. The west façade window appears to have had a transom with a single light over the double hung window (historic photographs show this window to probably date from ca. 1950; prior to that windows were double hung six over six light).

Doors (exterior)

One of the three doors remains, a wood panel door with window, stored in the building. Plywood is used to secure the door openings at present.

Flooring

1x6 wood flooring covered the west two rooms and has been, in part, removed.

Interior Doorways

The wood frames remain, but no doors from the historic period remain.

Alternatives for Treatment

The recommendations by Anthony Crosby, in his *Condition Assessment Report*, (2002), for the stabilization of the building should be followed. Further treatment should be prepared by an historical architect.

