



GURULÉ FAMILY NEWSLETTER

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OBSERVATIONS OF THE ORIGINAL LA BELLE PAINTING

By Eddie Sedillo

Calligraphy became a part of my life when I was a young guy and went to the Veteran's hospital for a week of testing for a case of bronchitis that wouldn't go away. Before going there, I bought a book on calligraphy and a calligraphy pen to help pass the time. It appeared that I had a natural hankering for calligraphy so I kept on practicing my penmanship, much to the delight of my mom who was always critical of my chicken scratch.

In late November 2010, Angela and I went to the New Mexico History Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico, to see the exhibition of the rare Spanish documents that is touring America. Part of that exhibition included the drawing of the French ship La Belle, which was drawn on a piece of vellum (an animal skin that had been prepared for writing/drawing).

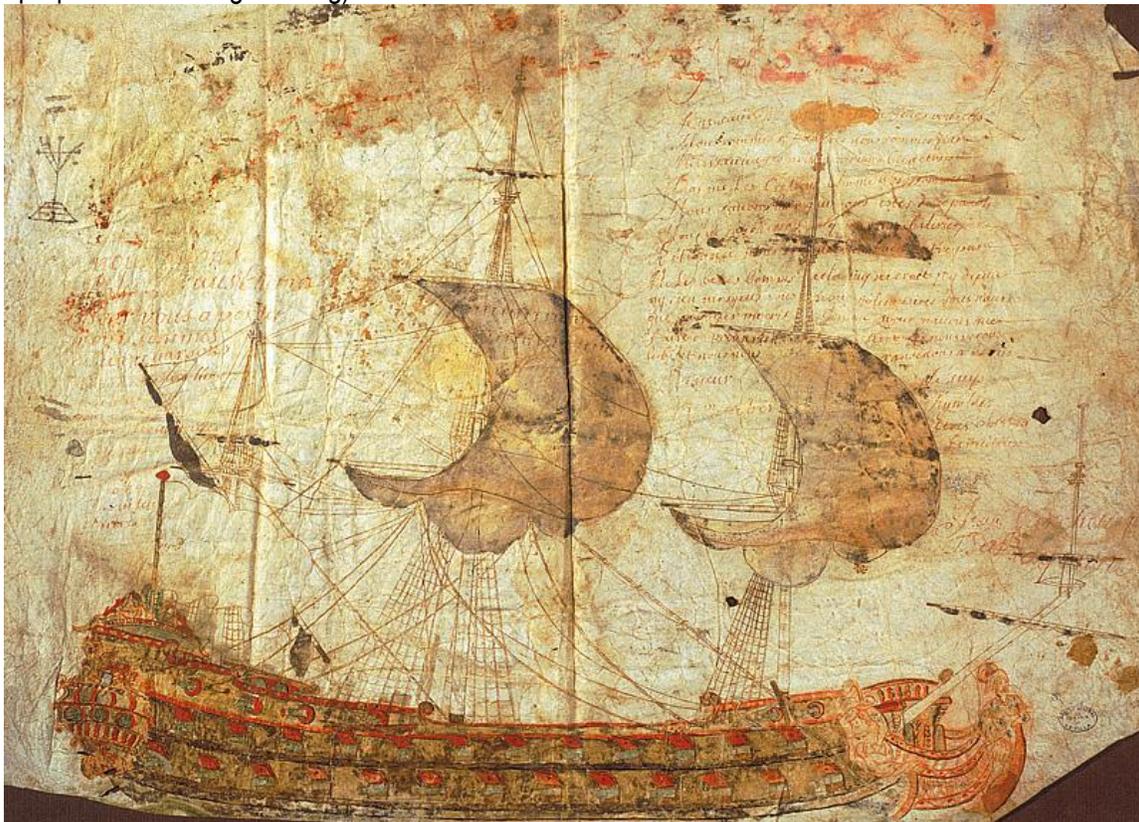


Figure 1 - Rescue notes written by Archeveque and Grolet on picture of Ship La Belle circa 1689

When I first saw the skin that had the message from Jean L'Archeveque and the drawing by Jacques Grolet, I was completely thrilled. It's so much easier to see more details on the original skin than on any photo or reproduction.

With my background in calligraphy, I noticed some things that others might not notice. For example, there is a scribble in the upper right hand corner of the skin. It's a similar type of thing, which I've done many times before – the scribble results from trying to get the ink flowing in the pen. The ink from the message on the left side of the skin flowed very weak at first, then flowed strongly, then became weak again. This pattern of ink flow happens to me when I've been away from my calligraphy for a while, and I have to get used to the rate of ink flow from whatever pen I start using.

Everyone agrees that the message on the right side of the skin belongs to Jean L'Archeveque. There is no doubt, as his signature at the bottom of the message is clear. The handwriting showed that the message was written with an even flow of ink throughout most of the message. Therefore, I believe Jacques wrote his message first on the left side, and then Jean wrote his message. By the time Jean wrote his message, the ink was flowing evenly.

The handwriting on the left side of the skin is clearly different and was a much nicer handwriting than was Archeveque's and appears to have been written by a different person. Who else would have had the talent write the message on the left in such beautiful handwriting? I think the writer of that message was Jacques Grolet. The reason I think this is that it makes sense to me that the nice script was probably written by the artist who drew the ship. This is because the only other people who were there when Grolet and L'Archeveque were captured by the Spanish were the Talon kids, and they were too young to have written that nice of a script.

I also believe Jacques drew the La Belle. He was a sailor who had an intimate knowledge of the ship and was familiar with all the rigging of the ship. I would guess that an artist with the ability to draw the La Belle would also have had the ability to write that nice script if he was literate. Therefore, I think this proves that Grolet was literate.

It is clear that the words of both messages on the skin mostly avoided the lines on the drawing and only in a few places were the words written over the drawing. Putting all this together, I think that Jacques first drew the outline of the La Belle, then both messages were written, and then Jacques finished the La Belle by coloring it in.

There is a fold that is very noticeable across the center of the drawing. It's quite easy to see that when it was folded, the red ink from the La Belle at the bottom of the skin stained the top of the skin, giving a faint upside down shadow of the La Belle. The ink from the written messages did not create a shadow nor did the ink from the rigging of the ship create a shadow.

There is also one place where it looks like there is an upside down shadow of one of the sails. I believe that Jacques finished coloring the La Belle and then, before it was completely dry, sent it to the Spaniards. At the top of the French ship is a Spanish flag – this can be seen clearly on the original document. At the back of the La Belle, he drew a white flag. Could that be a white flag of surrender? That seems to me to be quite ingenious if they were messages of friendship to the Spaniards. If so, it is further proof that the

ship and messages were created close to the same time that the Spaniards captured Jean and Jacques. In addition, it's further proof that Jacques was involved in creating the document.

For these reasons, I believe Jacques drew the ship and wrote the message on the left. If not Jacques, then who? I also believe that as the artist, Jacques had enough skill to make the different colors of ink and the pen and any other instruments with which he used to paint the ship. He must have been quite an artist!

So, I think that's just another reason why Elena Gallegos, a great woman with enough substance to have her own brand, could have become enamored with this wonderfully talented French guy named Jacques Grolet (aka Santiago Gurulé).

POST SCRIPT – DECEMBER 4, 2010



Eddie & daughter Lucinda Akers

Anyone who has ever done genealogy knows that part of the research process is studying the item repeatedly. In doing so, new ideas come forth and one suddenly sees the “document” or the “will” with new vision. In two trips to see the exhibition, I spent almost all my time while there looking at the La Belle painting.

Remember that on the upper right hand corner there was a scribble that I said looked like something I've done before to get the ink going in the pen. Well, I was sitting at my table having breakfast this morning and to the side of me was a piece of scrap paper. I had used it last night to get the ink flowing in my pen so that I could continue on a piece on which I was working. There was a scribble that caught my attention.

I don't know if it was pattern recognition from my other hobby of chess or just recognizing a pattern from art, but one of my scribbles looked familiar. The more I looked at it, the more familiar it seemed. Then it occurred to me - it was almost exactly like the scribble from the upper right hand corner of the skin. But, there was something different. As it turned out, in order to make exactly like the one on the skin, I had to turn it upside down and backwards. Then I started thinking about how that mark could physically have been made?

It occurred to me that if Jean and Jacques were seated across from each other, Jean facing the skin and Jacques on the opposite side facing Jean but so that the skin was upside down toward Jacques; and if Jacques did the scribble to get the ink flowing for Jean before giving Jean the pen...and if Jacques was left-handed, that is a scenario that would exactly explain how that scribble could have been made!

Because the first stroke of the pen has to be a downward stroke (otherwise the pen will pop), the assessment I'm making is something that I don't think is too much of a stretch. I think this forensic explains the details observed on the document.

PPS - Of course you know that a significant number of artists have been left handed - more so than would be expected in the general population.

Editors note: Look at the left side of the picture you will see an object drawn in black ink -Thanks to Larry Ruybal, Pueblo, CO for identifying the item - If you want to see his response – follow this link - <http://www.gurulefamily.org/history/pictures.shtml> P. Rau

MY DAY AT THE MUSEUM

By Angela Lewis

My excitement had been building ever since Eddie had told me about the La Belle painting being a part of the exhibit from Spain at the New Mexico History Museum. Eddie planned another trip back to Santa Fe, and invited me. Yeah! I was actually going to see the La Belle painting with my own two eyes! It's one thing to have the words from the painting on the Gurulé website, but to see the original was going to be exciting!



There's a special feeling inside a museum. It's almost as if you can feel the ancestors. As soon as we entered the museum, Eddie went at full speed ahead, straight to the La Belle painting. Now I knew what Eddie had felt the first time he saw it. We stayed there for a long, long time. The painting, dated about 1689, was thrilling. We both had our magnifying glasses and examined every single little detail. I was really amazed with the all detail on the ship. On the right side of the painting was the figure of the woman, the La Belle, which I thought looked like a fancy balcony seat at an opera. To the right of the woman was the "Seville" stamp. As Eddie had explained, it was clear that two different people had written their messages. It was neat seeing the white surrender flag that Eddie had described, something that can only be seen by looking at the original. Did he mention that Spain's flag was at the top of the ship?

Jean L'Archeveque's signature was very clear on the message written on the right side. These words have been captured on the Gurulé website (in English):

"Sir

I do not know what sort of people you are we are French; we are among the savages we would like much to be among the Christians such as we are. We know well that you are Spaniards. We do not know whether you will attack us; we are sorely grieved to be among the beasts like these who believe neither in God nor in anything (like) gentlemen. If you are willing to take us away, you have only to send a message as we have but little or nothing to do as soon as we see the note we will deliver ourselves up to you

Sir

*I am your very humble
and very obedient Servant
Jean L'Archeveque
of Bayonne"*

Sometime later, a museum tour guide came by with a group of people. I told him we would move and he said no, that he'd come by later. When the tour guide returned, Eddie and I had moved on by this time, but came back and joined the group to listen to what he had to say. At the end of his talk, he told the group that there were actually current day descendants in Santa Fe. Eddie and I both smiled as "we" were among them, but then raised our eyebrows when the tour guide said that the Archuleta surname had also derived from the Archeveque name. I still need to write a letter to the museum about that particular statement.

One couple lingered to look at the La Belle after the group left. Eddie shared some of the details he'd seen, and I told them about the Gurulé website. The man shared that his daughter, who was a part-time tour guide, had told him about the writing on the documents of that era. She said that pins were placed on the outsides of a drawing or map and then a string tied between the two pins. The string would act as a ruler for the person writing the document. This was very interesting as it explained why the writing was so even on all the various documents.

Chris Lucero, whose title was Palace Guard, stopped to talk to me as he'd noticed we had spent so much time on this one painting. It's a small world – his girlfriend's name is Crystal Gurulé and he's supposed to put her in touch with me.

Seeing all the Spanish documents was an experience of a lifetime, but seeing this one document was something I never thought would happen.

From the Editor: To examine get the depth of the painting type the following in your search engine: <http://online.nmhistorymuseum.org/threadsofmemory/gallery.php> Then, right click on the picture of the La Belle and do a "save as" and you save it to your personal computer. You can then open the file in your picture program and zoom on it. Remember the exhibit leaves New Mexico in January 2011.

THE LA SALLE COLONY

After having seen the exhibit in Santa Fe on the Spanish held documents and maps of different kinds, I went looking to see what other documents we could find that we could share. I found a map of the La Salle colony that would have shown some the detail from the LaSalle colonies. (P.Rau)

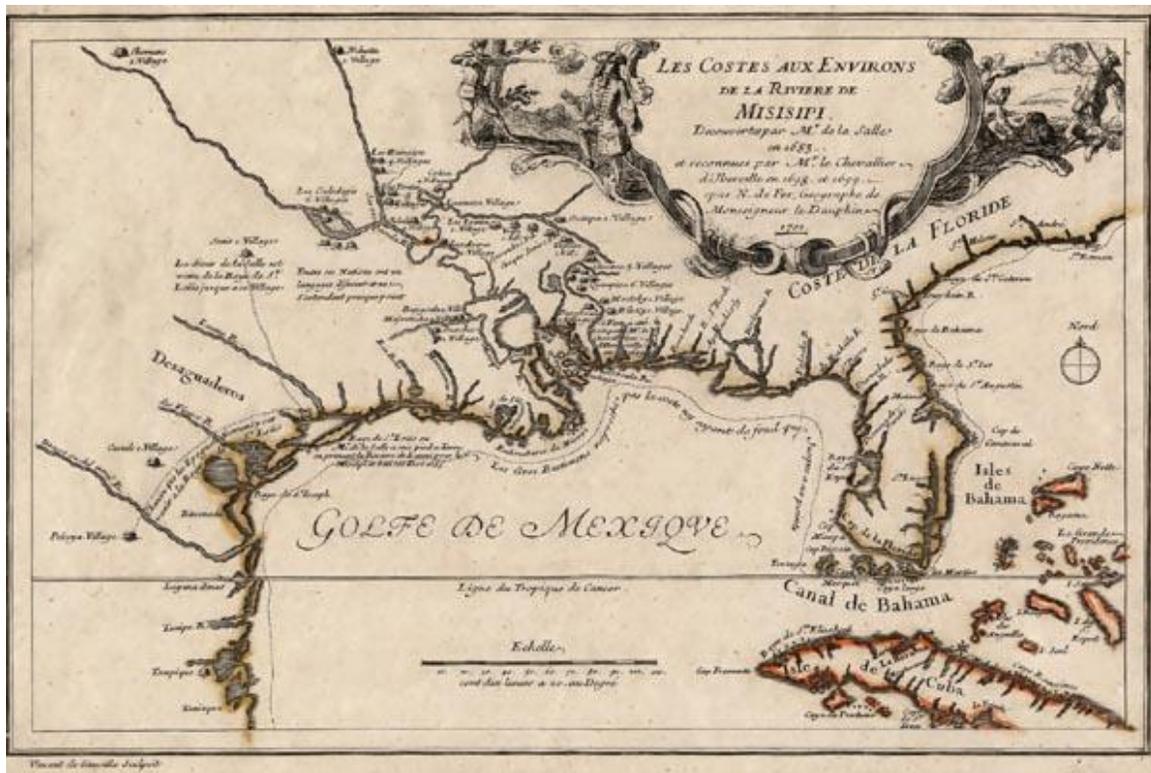


Figure 2 the LaSalle Colony circa 1685

THE ELENA GALLEGOS LAND GRANT
An excerpt from "Historic Albuquerque" by Marc Simmons

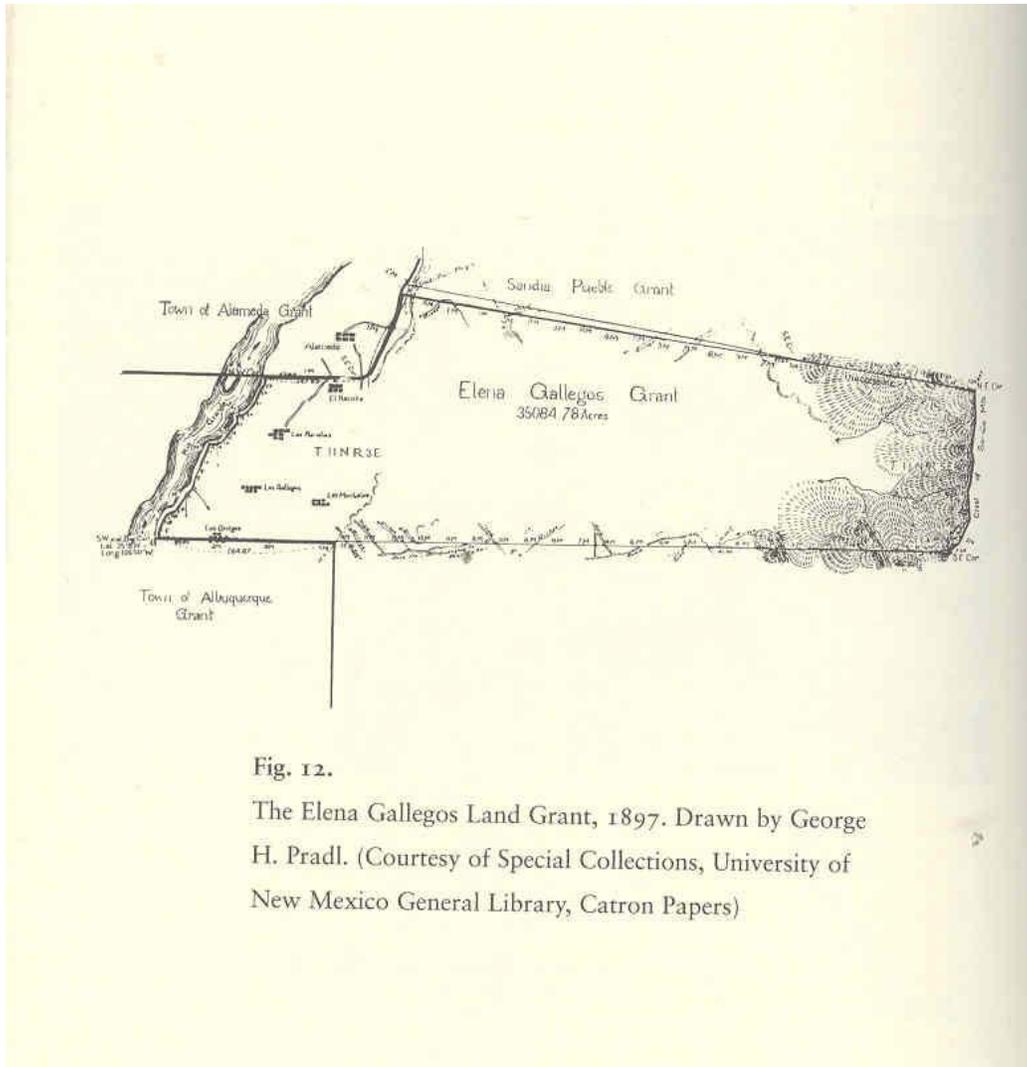


Fig. 12.
The Elena Gallegos Land Grant, 1897. Drawn by George
H. Pradl. (Courtesy of Special Collections, University of
New Mexico General Library, Catron Papers)

Figure 3 - Elena Gallegos Land Grant Map - 1697

The story of the Elena Gallegos Land Grant is interesting and yet speculative. The following is an excerpt from the book "Historic Albuquerque" by Marc Simmons.

..." Initially the land was granted to Captain Diego Montoya by Governor Penuela back in 1712. Shortly afterward, it was conveyed to Elena Gallegos, the widow of Santiago Gurulé. (As was often done in colonial New Mexico, she retook her maiden name upon her husband's death.) The property, which became known as the Elena Gallegos grant amounted to an estimated seventy thousand (70,000) acres, much of it on the East Mesa and in the Sandia Mountains. When she died in 1731, Elena asked in her will to be interred inside Albuquerque's parish church

“near the font of Holy Water” and requested that her burial be solemnized with a High Mass and wake. More to the point, she willed her estate to her only child Antonio Gurulé. He lived on the grant in a six-room house, until his own passing in 1761.

As the 18th century wore on, the descendents and heirs of Elena Gallegos and her son, Antonio subdivided the irrigable bottomlands along the Rio Grande into long narrow strips that ran from the river to the foot of the sand hills. Some of the strips were passed onto children of the next generation, while others were sold to outsiders. The greater portion of the grant, that part lying on the mesa and in the mountains, continued to be held and used in common. Anyone owning even the smallest particle of land within the grant was permitted to pasture his stock there.”

Part 2 – FOLLOW UP

As the decades passed, and the centuries, unpaid back taxes accumulated, the land eventually left the possession of Elena's descendants. A portion of the land grant came into the hands of one Albert G. Simms in the 1930s. Having no heirs, Mr. Simms later donated 15,000 acres to Albuquerque Academy, a private secondary school. In the early 1980s, the City of Albuquerque purchased 7,640 of Mr. Simm's portion of the grant from the school and entered into a land exchange with the U. S. Forest Service (USFS) who still manages much of the original grant as the Sandia Wilderness. Certain USFS lands were exchanged for surplus Federal lands and then given to the Albuquerque Open Space Division.

The 640-acre Elena Gallegos Picnic Area/Albert G. Simms Park was created in 1984. Surplus parcels of land were sold and the proceeds kept in a permanent fund, which Albuquerque Open Space Division continues to operate, in part, off the interest from this fund. The Division aims to 'acquire and protect the natural character of the land, manage it to conserve natural and cultural resources, provide opportunities for low-impact recreation, and define the edges of the urban environment.' It reaches, and exceeds, the latter goal at Elena Gallegos superbly.

Today, a visit to Elena Gallegos offers the same expansive vista of rocky cliffs, forested slopes, and piñon - juniper foothills that greeted Diego Montoya when he first explored his new possession. The piñon pine, one-seed juniper, cane cholla, and prickly pear cactus of the place still nurture wildlife populations today have changed very little from Elena Gallegos' time.

In 2004, Angela attended the 50th Anniversary of Albuquerque Academy School. Several months before, she'd been contacted by the school administration as they had discovered the Gurule website and wanted to use some of the historical information for their project -- honoring Elena Gallegos. In the school, they have an entire wall where they have mural sized paintings of Elena Gallegos since the school was located on part of the Elena Gallegos land grant. At the time of the dedication, Angela took six pictures of the murals, never dreaming that they would be a part of the newsletter.

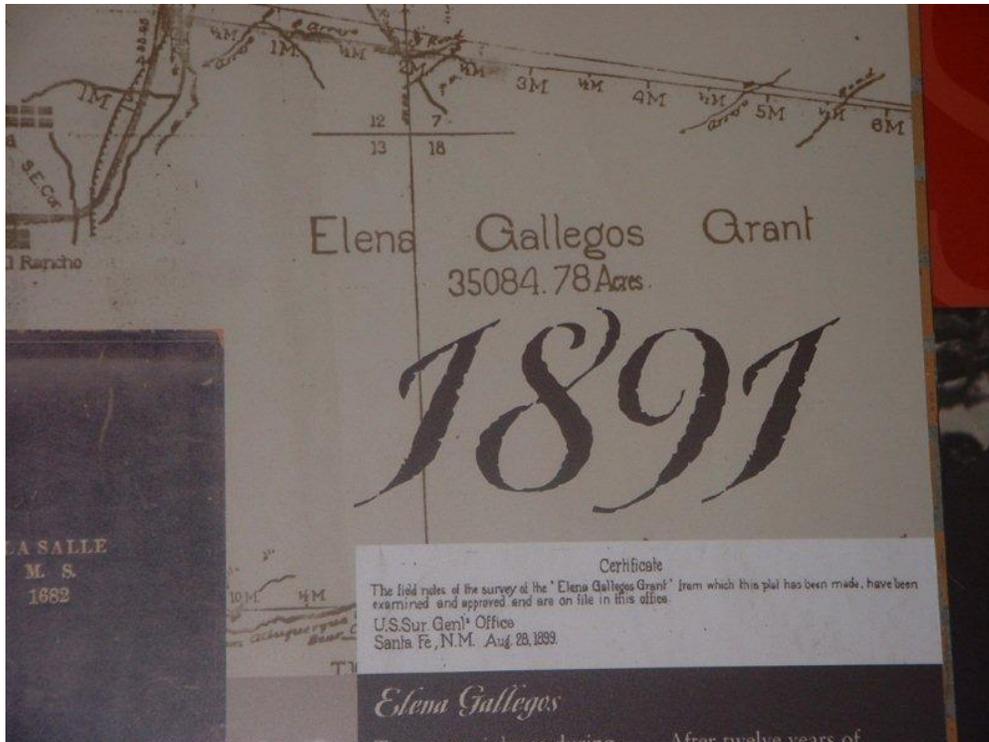


Figure 4 - Mural showing date of the grant

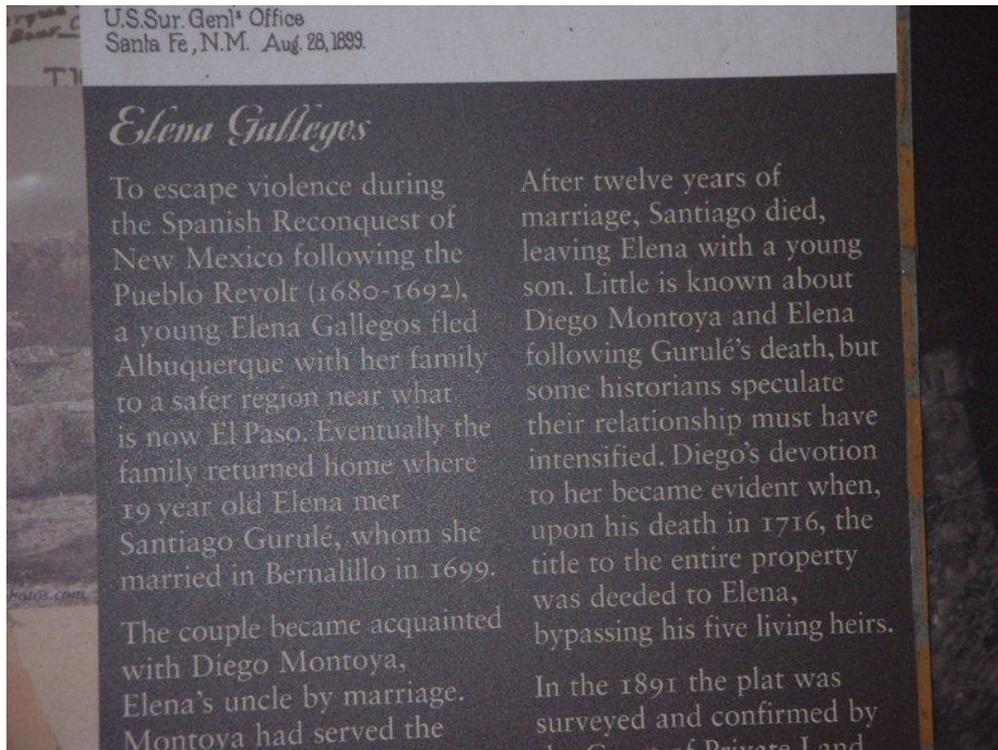


Figure 5 - Story of Diego Montoya giving land to Elena Gallegos

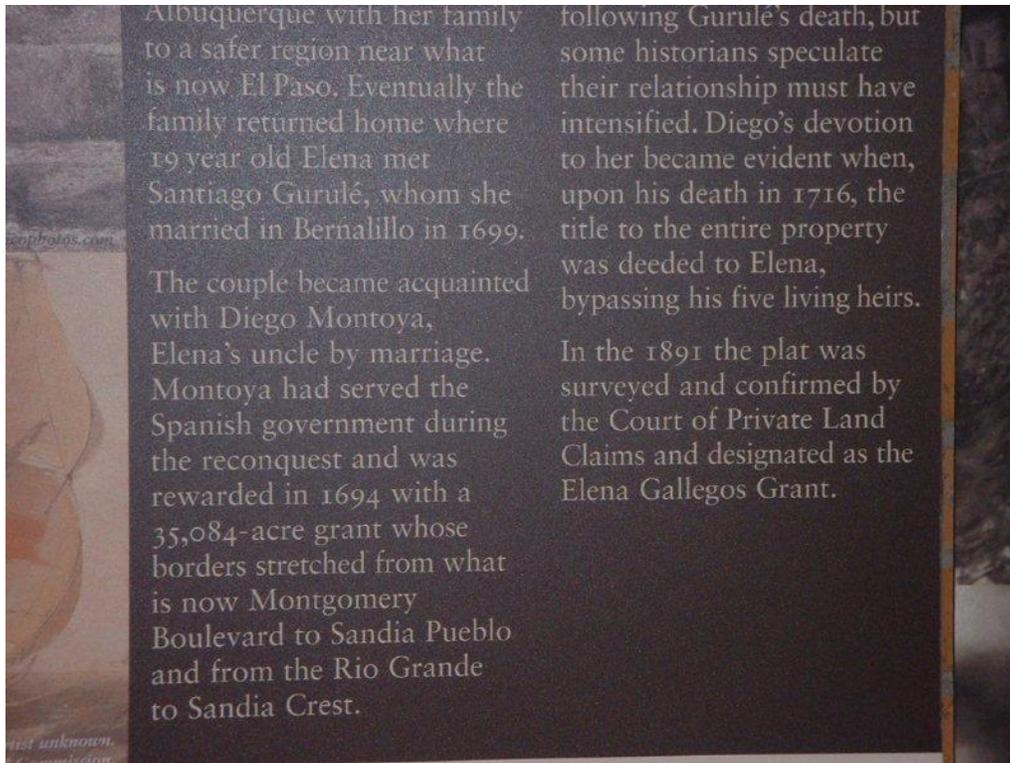


Figure 6 - Continuation of the Diego Montoya to Elena Gallegos story

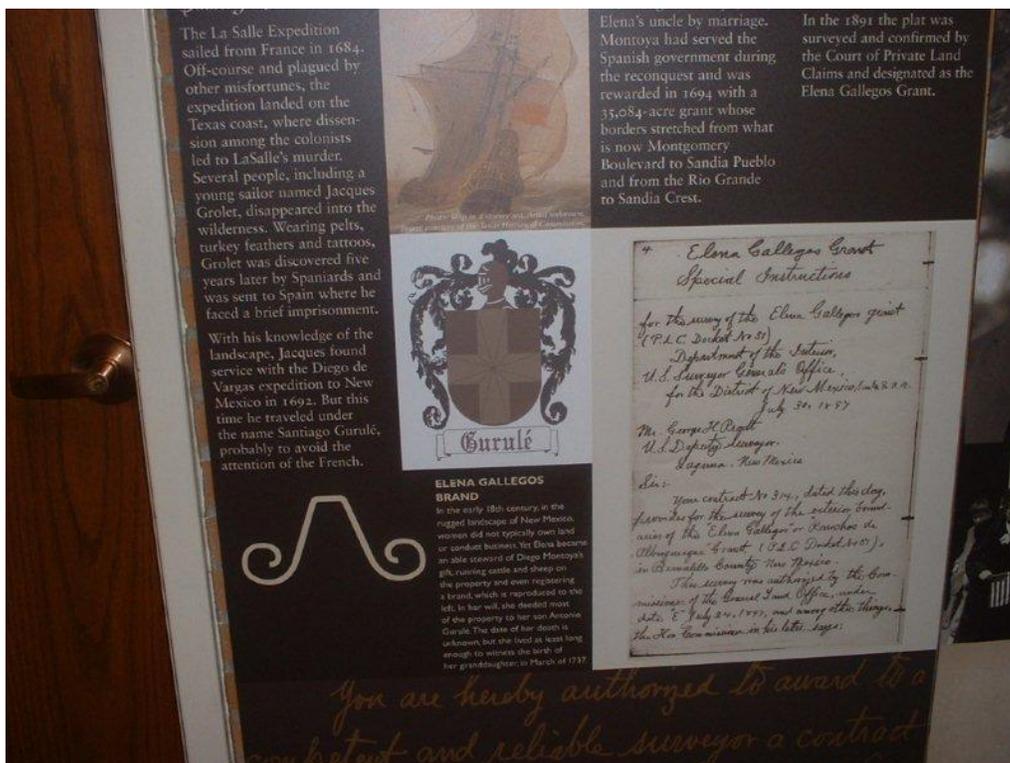


Figure 7 Gurulé coat of arms, Elena Gallegos cattle brand and LaSalle Ship

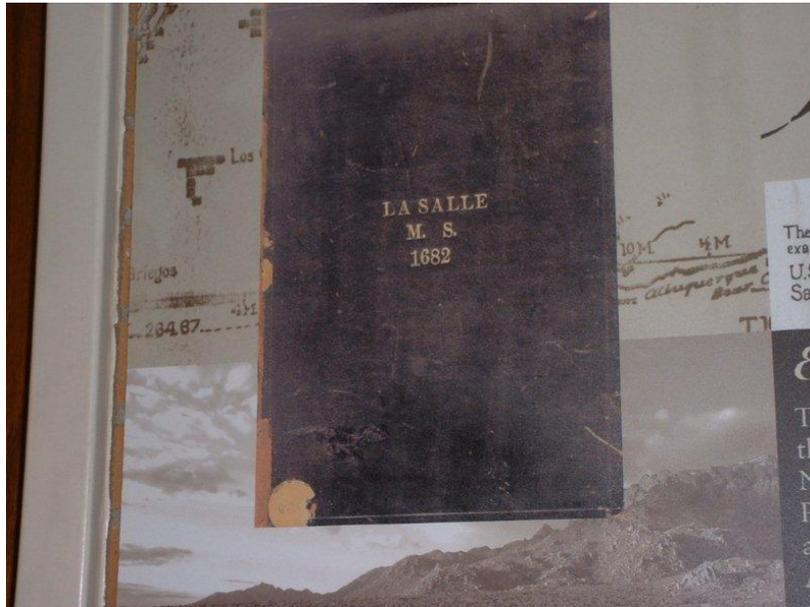


Figure 8 - LaSalle Journal

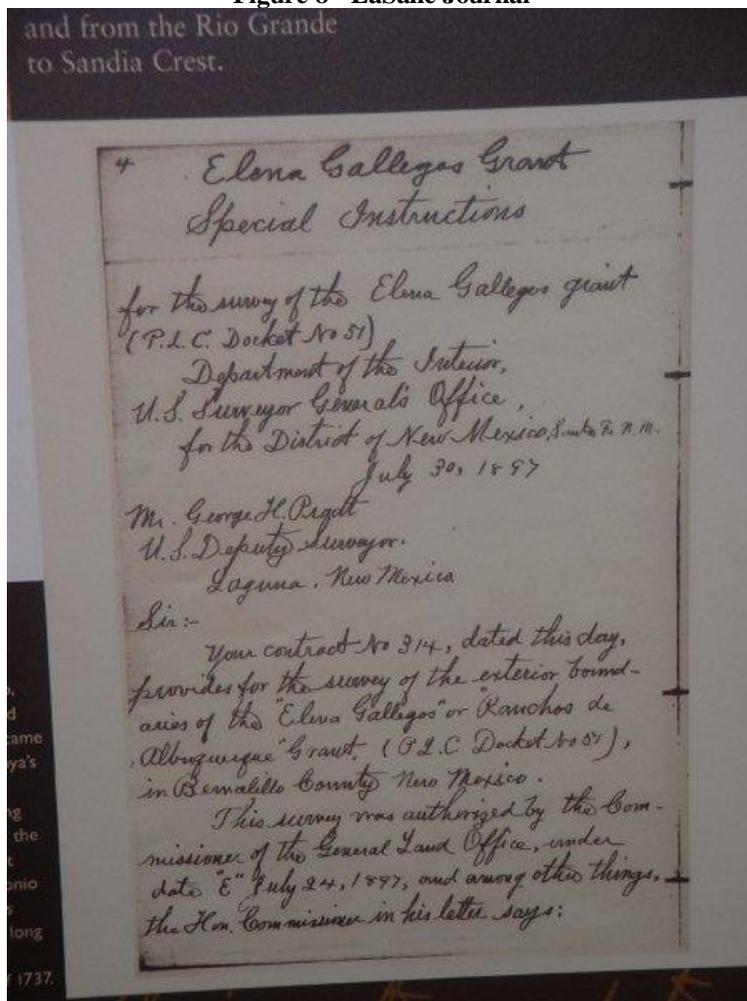


Figure 9 - Elena Gallegos Grant - Instructions

The next two pictures were on the Elena Gallegos Park Website and are just included here so that descendants get an idea of the view that the family would have enjoyed.



Figure 10 - Elena Gallegos Park - view from picnic area



Figure 11 - Elena Gallegos Park

Published & Edited by Patricia Sanchez Rau
Contributing Editor - Angela Lewis and the Gurulé Family Website
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We welcome the contribution of story ideas, stories, genealogy queries and milestone events in your lives. You may submit them to: Patricia Sanchez Rau by e-mail leadville5@aol.com or Angela Lewis or e-mail to gen4nm@nmia.com

