

# From Alcaldes to Mayors

## *A History of Leadership in Albuquerque*

a publication of the Albuquerque Museum, City of Albuquerque

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### *Introduction*

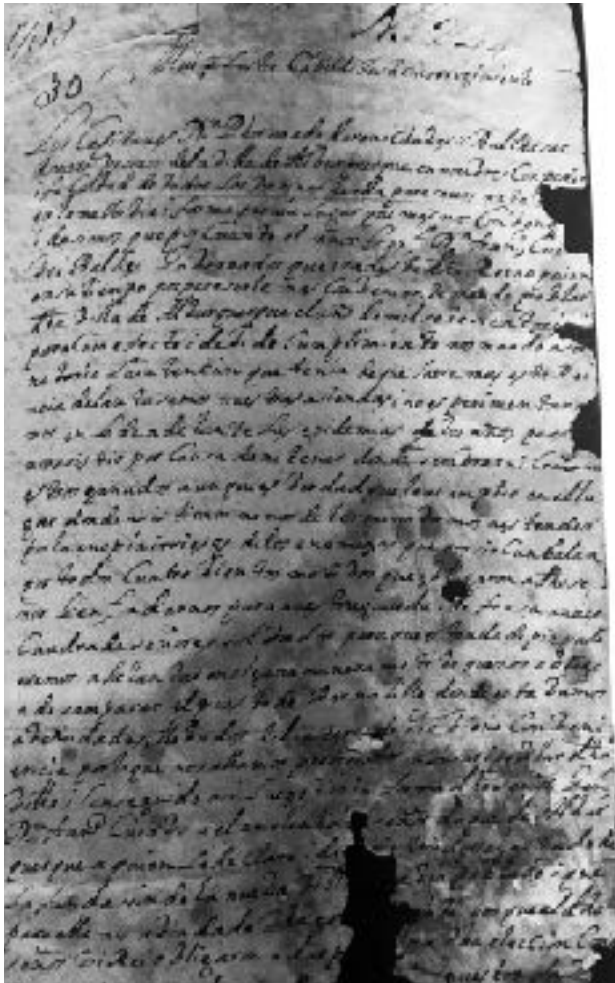
This project defines and identifies the leadership of Albuquerque throughout its history. Several iterations of Albuquerque's top official have existed over the last three hundred years, including but not limited to *alcaldes* (Spanish for chief administrator), *jefe politicos* (political bosses), mayors, military personnel, aldermen, and city commissioners. This document is an electronic version of a collaborative exhibit of Albuquerque's leadership timeline, its contents edited for readability in essay format here. Part of an ongoing effort to document the history of city leadership in Albuquerque, New Mexico, this preliminary draft is the first documented effort we found that gathers a comprehensive chronology of leadership since Albuquerque was established in 1706. In coming months and years, the research team will update this document, collect information, and check original sources in order to develop a more inclusive and complete history.

The leadership timeline project was initiated in 2021, under the direction of Dr. Shelle Sanchez, Director of Arts and Culture, City of Albuquerque; Dr. Tom Chavez researched the history of leadership; Robin Hesse, Graphic Artist, and Jill Hartke, Photo Archivist, [Albuquerque Museum](#), designed the wall exhibit. The timeline is on view in the Mayor's lobby on the 11th floor of City Hall, and the public is welcome to view the exhibit. Many images within this document and in the timeline exhibit are part of the [Albuquerque Museum's Digital Photo Archives](#) or the [Center for Southwest Research](#) collections at the University of New Mexico. Copyright and other proprietary rights in the text, images, audio files, video files and clips, documentation or other information or content included in the Alcalde Project (Materials) may be held by the City of Albuquerque or individuals or entities other than the City of Albuquerque. All rights not expressly granted herein by the City of Albuquerque are specifically and completely reserved. Prior written approval is required before reproducing any Materials.

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**Albuquerque existed under the authority of Spain for a large part of its history.** From 1706 to 1821, Albuquerque's leaders answered to Spain's appointed governors in Santa Fe and Viceroy's in Mexico City. After Mexican Independence in 1821, the town answered to the new country of Mexico. Since 1848 until now, the town grew into a city as part of the United States, first under military rule, then as a territory, and finally in 1912 as the largest city in the new state of New Mexico.

**This project is an attempt to uncover who were the leaders of Albuquerque from its beginning.** A "[leader](#)" is defined as a person or thing that leads, a person followed by others. In this case, Albuquerque's leaders are mostly but not limited to political individuals. This project is a beginning, a hint of a history naming individuals whose leadership led to the survival and determination that maintained and grew a small agricultural village into the thirty-second most populous city in the United States, and still growing—a modern western city.



“To the Very Illustrations City Council, Justice and Government:  
 “The Captains Fernando Duran y Chaves and Baltazar Romero, residents of the Villa of Albuquerque, in the name and with the authority of all of the citizens of the same, appear before your excellency and asking that all the privileges allowed by law be given them, they say that whereas the Señor General Don Francisco Quecho y Valdez, who was governor of this kingdom, and who in his time, because it appeared to him to be more advantageous, ordered that the said Villa of Albuquerque he settled in the year of one thousand seven hundred and six, for which object and its due fulfillment he directed us to make public his desire that this kingdom should be greater and that we should increase our estates and not experience in the future the epidemics of the preceding years; he assisted us because we had no lands to plant nor on which to raise our stock (and) although he gave them abundantly at the place where we now are we did not decide to enter upon them because of our poverty and the danger from the enemies which surround us on all sides, reasons which obliged the said general to give us for our guard and defense a squadron of soldiers, in order that they being present we might make some progress, reasons which induced us to leave Bernalillo, where we resided; influenced by the desire to promote our welfare and comfort, we were impelled to make both and settle the said Villa, and this having been accomplished the said General Don Francisco Quecho y Valdez made a report of the same to his excellency the Duke of Albuquerque, to whom he reported and explained the condition of the new Villa. [turn — small space] he had settled and that for it he had given us said [turn, same as above] reasons which caused the said viceroy to give [turn as above] an election as appears by his order [turn as above] in our favor, in order that it might so appear, and at the same time he sent several vestments and altar furniture and a bell for the said Villa, for which reason we believed that he was well pleased with the said settlement urging upon the said general with much earnestness the necessity for the preservation and increase of the said Villa of Albuquerque; and now the Señor Marqués de la Pezuela, governor and captain-general, at this time has been pleased to take away the said escort, for which reason the enemy, seeing our weakness, have dared arrogantly to commit various robberies, every day carrying

(Figures 1 & 2: original sixteenth century letter from residents and its translation, lobbying for Hurtado to lead Albuquerque.

*Spanish Colonial Period (1706-1821)*

Albuquerque, with its original initial “r,” was founded in 1706 with thirty-five families (252 people). Many of the families included women as heads of household. The known founding women are **Isabella Cedillo Rico de Rojas, María de la Encarnación, Francisca de Góngora, María Gutierrez, Juana Hurtado, Juana López del Castillo, Antonia Gregoria Lucero de Godoy, Leonor Lujan Domínguez, Francisca Montoya, Juana Montoya, María Montoya, Clementa de Ortega María de Ortega, María de Ribera, Jacinta Romero, Gregoria Ruiz.**

In 1706, military commander **Captain Martín Hurtado** was appointed by Governor Francisco Cuervo y Valdes to organize the original settlement of Albuquerque, from Alameda south to Isleta, and oversee the dispersal of land. As military commander of a small contingent of ten troops, Hurtado was ordered to return to Santa Fe with his troops leaving Albuquerque without military protection.

By 1708, **Captain Baltazar Romero and Fernando Duran y Chaves**, were titular leaders. Both were original settlers in Albuquerque and had survived the [Pueblo Revolt](#) of 1680, in which local [Puebloan peoples revolted](#) against Spanish colonists' religious, economic, and political institutions in North America. As a result, the Spanish were banished from the area for twelve years.

After the wars, Romero and Duran y Chaves returned to New Mexico, settling in Bernalillo but then claiming ancestral land and joining the original settlement of Albuquerque. After the governor ordered the withdrawal of Hurtado's military contingent, their fellow citizens asked them to compose and present a letter beseeching the governor and his council to return the military contingent to Albuquerque. They signed the letter and personally delivered it. As a result, the military contingent returned and Hurtado was assigned to return to Albuquerque as "war chief and *alcalde* in 1710. An [alcalde](#), as defined by *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*, is "the chief administrative and judicial officer or the mayor of a town in a Spanish-speaking country or region."

In 1712, **Juan Gonzales Bas** led Albuquerque. Captain Gonzales was from an established family who had ancestral lands in the area on which he claimed to have been born. Gonzales would be *alcalde* of Albuquerque for multiple terms in the next twenty-six years, his last documented year as *alcalde* being 1738. His name is on El Morro, and one of his sons built Nuestra Señora de la Concepción church in Alameda.

In 1714 and 1718, **Martín Hurtado** continued his head leadership role in Albuquerque. Other leaders from this period were **Pedro Chaves** and **Luiz García**, who were leaders of Albuquerque c. 1715. In 1722, Hurtado was apparently named *alcalde* a third time, but he resigned in February of that year after he was blamed for losing the founding documents of Albuquerque.

From 1731-1733, Albuquerque leader Juan Gonzales Bas was involved in an inquisition of witchcraft against the governor of [Isleta Pueblo](#), but it was concluded that he was not practicing black magic but rather was a medicine man who used peyote. There is also mention of **Manuel Garcia** who was removed from his spot as *alcalde* for not prosecuting a case of witchcraft at [San Ildefonso Pueblo](#).

Other *alcaldes* of Albuquerque in the 1730s included **Joseph Pérez Mangos** (1733), **Geronimo Xaramillo** (1734, 1735, 1736), **Juan Gonzales Bas** (1735 and 1738), and **Antonio Montoya** (1738).

In 1742, **Antonio Ulibarrí** is mentioned as *alcalde* of [Laguna](#), [Acoma](#), and [Zuni](#). In 1731, he became *alcalde* of Santa Fe. Ulibarrí took part in several important campaigns against Native Americans in the area and was the legal representative for the soldiers. For the rest of the 1740s, Albuquerque was run by **Joseph Baca** (1745), **Juan Moya** (1746), and **José Baca** (1747).

In 1746, **Bernardo Antonio de Bustamante** led Albuquerque. He was partially responsible for the reestablishment of [Sandia Pueblo](#) with people from the [Hopi Pueblos](#). The new Pueblo was initially placed under the *alcalde* of Albuquerque but a few years later was placed under the new *alcaldia* of Sandia. Albuquerque's population including the suburb of [Atrisco](#) and mission, was reported to be five hundred Spanish and two hundred Native Americans (then called "Indians"). (Twitchell I, 445)

In 1752, **Manuel Gallego** led Albuquerque, and he led again ten years later, in 1762. In 1760, Bishop of Durango, Pedro Tamarón y Romeral, visited and reported, "Some poor men whom the governors install as *alcaldes mayores*, individuals who have not prospered in other office or who have been ruined in trade; or deserters from studies by which they did not profit, who became paper shufflers

and swindlers. Such are usually the qualifications of these *alcaldes mayores*, a career aspired to by useless or ruined men.” (*Illustrated History*, 69)

**Francisco Treból Navarro** ruled Albuquerque in 1761 and 1763. **Baltazar Griego**, assistant *alcalde* in 1764, oversaw the establishment of [Carnué land grant](#) twelve miles east in Tijeras Canyon. The mid 1760s found **Miguel Lucero** leading Albuquerque in 1765, and **Juan Cristóbal (Xptobal) Sánchez** serving in 1766. Lucero died in 1768. Following Lucero’s death, **Juan C. Sánchez** again served as leader of Albuquerque, then **Joseph Apodaca**.

Carnué suffered a series of raids culminating in October of 1770, when the community was abandoned and the survivors moved back to Albuquerque. The governor ordered then *alcalde*, **Francisco T. Navarro**, to nullify the Carnué grant unless it was immediately resettled. When people refused to move to the dangerous site, he had them destroy what was left of the abandoned buildings. From roughly 1772, when **Bernabe Montaña y Cuellar**, to the end of the decade, the territory, and especially Albuquerque, suffered a severe drought. In 1774, increased raids and drought made Albuquerque an increasingly dangerous place to live. Navarro petitioned to settle Carnué anew, but the petition failed.

In 1776, **Fray Francisco Anatasio Domínguez** visited Albuquerque and reported a population of 157 families, 763 persons, and twenty-four houses. He wrote, “The villa itself consists of twenty-four houses near the mission. The rest of what is called Albuquerque extends upstream to the north, and all of it is a settlement of ranches on the meadows of the said river (Rio del Norte or Rio Grande) for a distance of a league (2.7 miles) from the church to the last one upstream. . . [the lands] are watered by the said river through very wide, deep irrigation ditches . . . there are little beam bridges to cross them . . . everything sown in them bears fruit. There are also little orchards with vine stocks and small apricot, apple, and pear trees. Delicious melons and watermelons are grown.” He added that wine was made. (*Missions of New Mexico*, 151).

In 1777, Francisco Navarro was once again *alcalde* of Albuquerque. In the spring of 1780, a smallpox epidemic swept through the Rio Grande Valley. One-fourth of New Mexico’s population died.

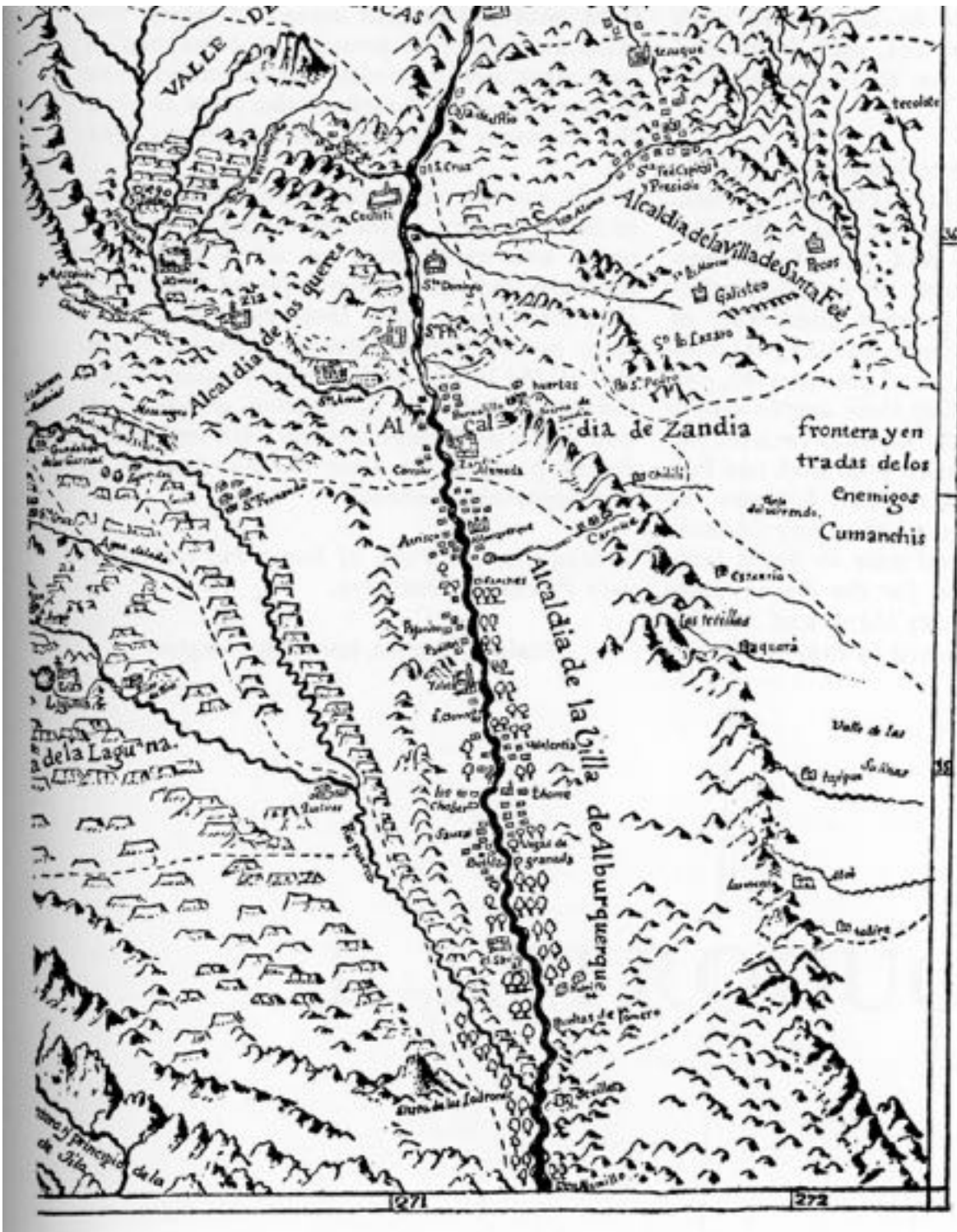
**Manuel de Arteaga**, a native of Mexico City, possibly was Albuquerque’s *alcalde* from at least 1785 until 1792 (and probably beyond). Around 1786, Albuquerque’s original church collapsed. It faced east on the west end of the plaza. Sometime during or after 1790, construction of the new church began, and it was completed around 1793. This church is the precursor of [today’s church](#) in Old Town.

In the 1790s, **Nerio Antonio Montoya** was also a leader in Albuquerque and surrounding Corrales. Other leaders of the 1790s include **Antonio Armenta** and **Antonio Arteaga**. In 1799, a census reported the population of Albuquerque as 4020.

During this period, Albuquerque produced crops of fruit, some cotton, corn, wheat, beans, made *punche* (a drink), and raised sheep and some cattle. The town had a small industry of weaving and leatherwork and raised mules and burros for barter on the *Camino Real*.

Antonio Arteaga continued his leadership throughout the first four years of the 1800s. Other leaders of this time include **Josef Manuel Aragón** (1801), **Antonio Estanislao Ruiz** (1804), and Manuel de Arteaga. In 1805, Manuel de Arteaga was *alcalde* and oversaw the application of vaccinations for smallpox. He was required to provide lists of names of individuals who already had contacted smallpox, those who had not, and those who had received the serum.





Illustration, 1779 Map by Bernardo Miera y Pacheco showing the *alcaldia* of Albuquerque.

**Anacleto “Cleto” Bernardo Miera y Pacheco** led Albuquerque, Alameda, and Corrales in 1806 and 1809-10.

On March 7, 1807, U.S. explorer and army officer Zebulon M. Pike wrote about Albuquerque, “Both above and below Albuquerque, the citizens were beginning to open the canals to let in the water of the river to fertilize the plains and fields which border its banks on both sides, where we saw men, women, and children of all ages and sexes at joyful labor which was to crown with rich abundance their future harvest and insure them plenty for the ensuing year ... The cultivation of the fields was now commencing and everything appeared to give life and gaiety to the surrounding scenery.” (*Illustrated History*, 86)

**Lorenzo Gutierrez** was *alcalde* in 1808. Around this time, **José Pino** is listed as an ex *alcalde* of Aburquerque, though the dates of service are unclear. (Twitchell, I, 470).

**José Antonio Chaves** and Antonio Ruiz were leaders in 1810-1811. In 1810, Ruiz helped Manuel de Arteaga provide lists of names of individuals who already had contracted smallpox, those who had not, and those who had received the serum. He wrote, “[here is the] current listing of the population of Albuquerque who have been vaccinated from the 22nd of August until this date in this jurisdiction according to my commission, with lists of their names, ages, the names of their parents and places of their residences. [18 October 1810 \(signed\) Antonio Ruiz.](#)”

From 1812-1815, **José Mariano de la Peña** led Albuquerque. Around then, Pedro Bautista Pino lists Isleta, [Tomé](#), [Belén](#), Sabinal, [Socorro](#), and Laguna as *alcaldias* that were subservient to the authority of the *alcalde* of Albuquerque.



Painting of Governor Manuel Armijo

Around 1815, **Juan José Gutierrez** was *alcalde*.

**Captain Bartolomé Baca**, then fifty years old, was commander of Albuquerque’s Calvary Company of Volunteer Militia. Baca became governor of the territory from 1823-25. Other heads of Albuquerque during this time include **Manuel Celis Ruvi** (1818), **Juan de Dios Peña** (1818). In 1818, Carnué was reestablished, followed in 1819 by the village of San Antonio further east in Tijeras Canyon. **Franciso Armijo** closed out the Spanish Colonial period leading Albuquerque in 1821 before the next ruling party began.

### *Mexican Period (1821-1848)*

When Mexico won its independence from Spain, New Mexico became a northern department of the new country and basically retained its now traditional political system. The idea of a town council or *ayuntamiento* became more common. The *alcaldes* continued to be the chief local officials who presided over lower courts for most area villages. (Jenkins & Schroeder, 34)

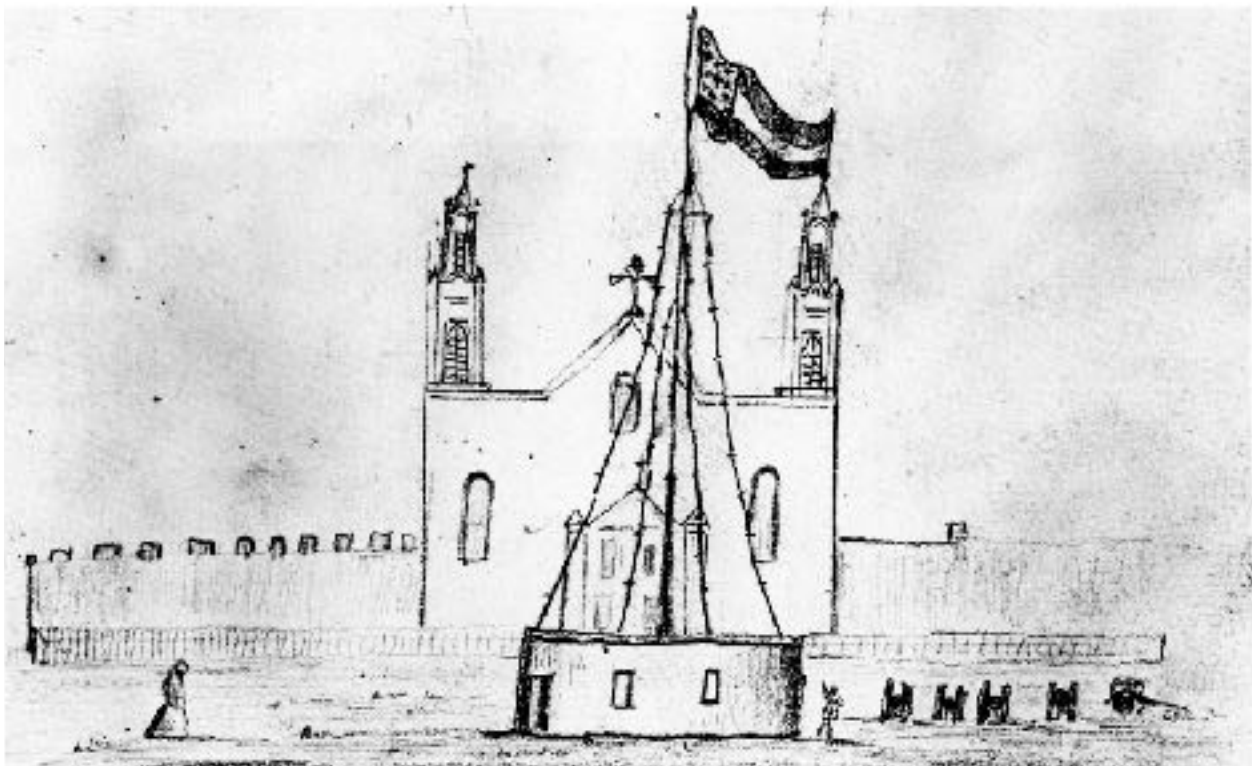
The Santa Fe Trail opened up and connected with the “Chihuahua Trail” (the old *Camino Real*). The new trade route gave rise to an elite class: namely, the **Armijo, Chaves, Otero, and Baca** families in Albuquerque. Four Armijo brothers—**Francisco, Ambrosio, Juan, and Manuel**— held terms as *alcalde* in the 1820s and 1830s.

**Antonio Ruiz** was elected *alcalde* in 1821. In 1825, **Bartolomé Baca** was “*jefe politico*” (“political boss”) of Albuquerque. The government in Mexico ordered all Iberian-born Spaniards to leave in 1827.

**Ambrosio Armijo** was *alcalde* in 1828 and doubled as a truant officer for the new public school system administered by Mexico. He petitioned his brother, Governor **Manuel Armijo**, for public school funds for Albuquerque. Manuel Armijo was New Mexico’s governor on three occasions (1827-29, 1837-44, 1845-46), resigning in 1829 to become Albuquerque’s *alcalde*. As a commander, Manuel Armijo repelled the Pueblo Revolt of 1837 and the Texan Santa Fe Expedition.

### *United States Territorial Period (1848-1912)*

**F**rom 1846-48, the Mexican War raged. New Mexico was occupied by the U.S. Army of the West. The war ended in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. From 1848-1850, New Mexico was under U.S.



A confederate soldier, Sgt. Alfred Peticolas, sketched the confederate flag flying on Carlton’s flagpole outside of Felipe de Neri Church in the plaza on April 1862, courtesy Albuquerque Museum.

military rule. Vestiges of the military rule continued with governors appointed from Washington D.C. during the Territorial Years. With the Compromise of 1850, New Mexico became a Territory of the United States. With white encroachment, the first “r” of “Albuquerque” had been dropped frequently from use, so by sometime in the mid-to-late 1800s, “Albuquerque,” with one “r,” had become the standard.

On April 17, 1851, Albuquerque got its first official United States Post Office. **John Webber** was the first postmaster. In 1856, **Major James Carlton** was the military commander in Albuquerque. He tried various civic improvements and created the first ferry across the Rio Grande River around today’s Barelvas Bridge. Carlton also installed a 150-foot flagpole in [Albuquerque’s plaza](#) that became a landmark.

On the morning of March 8, 1862, the first Confederate troops arrived in Albuquerque. They paraded into the plaza, and thirteen cannons fired a salute. The Confederate flag flew over the plaza until the morning of April 13 when the last of the Confederate troops fled south. **Brigadier General Henry Hopkins Sibley** commanded the southern troops.

James Carlton returned to New Mexico as a general in charge of the California Column. He was promoted to the new commander of the military Department of New Mexico. As such he oversaw the identification and prosecution of New Mexicans who had lent assistance to the Confederate army.

“Said accused did conspire to stir up and excite insurrection, rebellion and Civil War, against the United States to overthrow and subvert the Government,” he wrote. This initiative resulted in a period of trials that lasted throughout 1867. Convictions were rare, while the seizure of property became common.

On March 2, 1863, the first local election was held and seven **aldermen** were elected. These were four Hispanos and three Anglos. Three of the aldermen were brothers **Salvador** and **Cristóbal Armijo** and **William T. Strachan**, a store owner who would become a developer and entrepreneur.

On Sunday, July 5, 1868, all day a ten-mile cavalcade of Navajo people passed through Albuquerque on their return to their homeland after confinement at Bosque Redondo on the Pecos River after the Long Walk.

On March 3, 1879, Albuquerque’s first female postmistress, **Sarah M. Day**, served one day in the position. In March 1880, community leaders formed a reception committee for the arrival of the railroad, without a mayor. They elected **Franz Huning** as chairman and **Elias Stover** and **Santiago Baca** as vice presidents. The railroad arrived on April 10, 1880. (Simmons, 219)



Early photo of a locomotive, c. 1900, courtesy Albuquerque Museum Digital Archives, #PA1973.012.064





Photo of Henry Jaffa, Albuquerque's first mayor, courtesy Center for Southwest Research, UNM.



Photo of William Childers, courtesy NM State Bar Assn

**The first mayor of Albuquerque was elected in 1885, at which time mayors could serve one-year terms.** By this point, New Mexico had been in American hands, a prize of the Mexican American War, for thirty-seven years. Albuquerque, however, had just five years before been the site scouted by the [Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad](#) for a rail stop and railyard. The need for government corresponded with the rise of industry.

In 1885, **Henry N. Jaffa** was elected the first official “mayor” of Albuquerque. Jaffa immigrated to the U.S. from Germany in the mid-19th century and settled in Trinidad, Colorado, establishing a mercantile business. Then Jaffa moved to Las Vegas, New Mexico, and eventually settled in Albuquerque due to the arrival of the railroad. In 1897, he organized New Mexico’s first synagogue, [Congregation Albert](#).

**George Lail** was a land and property speculator from Missouri. He briefly owned the land and property near Albuquerque’s New Town district, which included the [Southwestern Brewery & Ice Co.](#), now at 601 Commercial Street. Lail became mayor of Albuquerque in 1886.

**William B. Childers** was Mayor of Albuquerque in 1887. Born in Pulaski, Tennessee, Childers received his law education at Washington and Lee University in 1874. After completing his education, he moved to St. Louis in 1875 and Albuquerque in 1879. Politically, Childers aligned with the Democratic party through his mayoral campaign and in 1896.

He realigned his political leanings that year to support the Gold Democrats, a short lived wing of the party that believed in individual freedom, the right of private contracts, and an independent judiciary. The party was created in reaction to the free silver policy, which would have raised prices and eased the reliance on the gold standard and introduced silver coinage into circulation.



**Photo of Arthur E. Walker, courtesy Center for Southwest Research, UNM.**



**Photograph of Mayor Michael Mandell, courtesy Center for Southwest Research, UNM.**

This policy was opposed by those who relied on the gold standard, such as banks, factories, and the railroads—the monied class. After his term as mayor, Childers became an alderman in 1892. In 1896, Childers became the U.S. District Attorney for New Mexico. He went on to be president of the [New Mexico State Bar](#) from 1902-1903. Childers was an advocate for New Mexico Statehood, part owner of the city's first gas plant, and a member of the [Commercial Club](#), a banquet business space at 4th and Gold that became the Simms Building. In 1893, Childers, with other to-be mayors and businessmen, incorporated Albuquerque National Bank. It closed six years later.

**Arthur E. Walker** was mayor in 1888. Walker was possibly in real estate or the owner of A. E. Walker Lumber Company. He was Officer and Director of the Mutual Building Association of Albuquerque, which operated like a bank. In addition to being mayor, Walker served as a city trustee and probate clerk.

In 1889, the [University of New Mexico](#) was founded. **Colonel Gurdon W. Meylert** was mayor of Albuquerque that year. Meylert was a member of the Commercial Club and was a land promoter who assisted in the development of the San Felipe Hotel, at 5th and Gold, and land for the University of New Mexico. Meylert was appointed to UNM's first Board of Regents. A temperance advocate, he also served as a city trustee and treasurer, in addition to being mayor.



Early photo of University of New Mexico, Hodgin Hall, c. 1889, courtesy Center for SW Research, UNM.



Albuquerque sewer system, 1891, photo courtesy Albuquerque Museum, #PA1982.181.120

The subsequent mayor of Albuquerque, **Frank W. Clancy**, was also on UNM's Board of Regents.

In 1890, **Michael Mandell** was mayor of Albuquerque. Born in Alsace-Lorraine, France, Mandell moved to the United States at fifteen. He was owner of Mandell Brothers Hardware and Dry Goods Store. In 1890, Mandell, along with other prominent politicians and businessmen, founded the Bank of Commerce of Albuquerque. In 1891, Albuquerque was incorporated. Mandell created a new government composed of a mayor, board of aldermen, and four wards. Before his tenure as mayor, Mandell was Treasurer of Bernalillo County. He was also a City Trustee.

In 1891, **Joseph E. Saint** was mayor of Albuquerque. He served as council member in the thirteenth territorial legislative assembly. As mayor, Saint approved a \$60,000 bond to build a school. His house, at 216 9th St SW, is on the Register of Historic Places. Like Mehylert before him, Saint was a member of the Commercial Club.

In 1891, Albuquerque incorporated. The original settlement, Old Town, and the new area by the railroad called New Albuquerque were created. The city installed a sewer system on Second Street in New Town in 1891, its second sewer system. The first system was put in in 1888, but the town grew so rapidly by 1891 the first sewer system was too small to serve New Town, so a new one was needed three years later.

**George Easterday, M.D.** was mayor of Albuquerque in 1892. Easterday was very involved in politics and medicine in early Albuquerque. Before being mayor, he was a city trustee in 1887. Dr. Easterday was also a member of various medical boards, including the New Mexico Board of Medical



**Photo of Mayor George S. Easterday, M.D., courtesy Albuquerque Museum.**



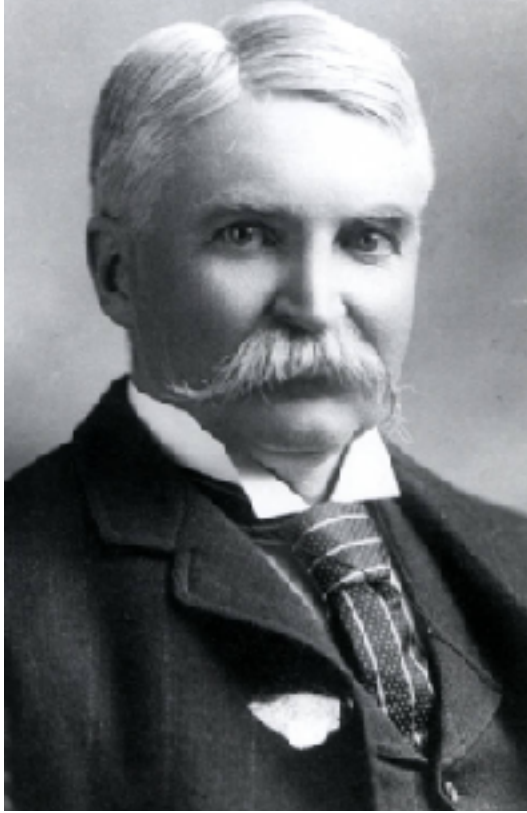
**Photo of Neil B. Field, courtesy New Mexico State Bar Association.**

Examiners and the Hadley Climatological Laboratory at UNM, which collected statistics on climatology, pathology, physiography, and physics to prove the beneficial qualities of New Mexico's climate to patients with tuberculosis.

**Neil B. Field** was mayor of Albuquerque in 1892. Born in Louisville, Kentucky, Field was a prominent lawyer in Albuquerque who served as President of the New Mexico State Bar Association and was a member of the Commercial Club. In 1888, before his tenure as mayor, Field along with other prominent politicians and merchants, organized the Caledonian Coal Company, operated near Gallup, New Mexico. The company was later consolidated into the Victor American Fuel Company. Later in life, Field was an officer and director of the New Mexico Central Railway, which was incorporated in 1900. During Field's term, in September of 1893, [Albuquerque's Suffrage Club](#) begins working for women's suffrage in New Mexico Territory.

**John Luthy**, an immigrant to the United States from Switzerland, was mayor of Albuquerque in 1894. Luthy was one of three incorporators of The Union Gas & Traction Company, which developed, constructed, and operated oil, gas, electric, and waterworks. His son, C. F. Luthy, was a vice president of Albuquerque National Bank and went on to own the bank when the president died in an oilwell accident that left C.F. Luthy blind. The Luthy family became one of the wealthiest families in New Mexico.





Mayor Frank W. Clancy, courtesy Center for Southwest Research, UNM.



Albuquerque, 1890s, courtesy ABQ Museum. Top: New Town, PA2019.021.053. Bottom: 2nd Street PA2019.006.005

**Joseph C. Baldrige** was mayor in 1895-1896. Baldrige was founder of the J. C. Baldrige Lumber Company, operating from 1881-2005, that supported the fledgling railroad industry. Baldrige Lumber was one of the first “businesses” in Albuquerque, as we understand business today. Immediately after his term as mayor, Baldrige served as Probate Clerk for Bernalillo County for a year. Like leaders before him, he was a member of the Commercial Club.

**Dr. Strickland Aubright** was mayor in 1897. A surgeon in the Civil War, Albright was Superintendent of the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad Hospital in Albuquerque and a strong advocate for building a tuberculosis sanitarium in Albuquerque. Before his tenure as mayor, he was as an alderman in 1894.

**Frank Willey Clancy** was mayor of Albuquerque in 1898. Born in Dover, New Hampshire, Clancy grew up in Washington, D.C., and attended Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, now George Washington University. For several years, Clancy worked for William E. Chandler, who would go on to be Senator for New Hampshire. In 1874, Clancy moved to New Mexico but left for several years to serve as secretary to Richard C. McCormick, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury and Commissioner General for the 1878 Paris Exhibition. When Clancy moved back to New Mexico in 1879, he became clerk of both the Supreme and District Courts in Santa Fe. He then left this position to pursue his own legal practice. In 1890, Clancy was elected President of the State Bar Association. He moved to Albuquerque in 1892 and was on the first Board of Regents for UNM. In 1897, Clancy was part of a committee to draft a state constitution. After his term, in 1909, Clancy was appointed Attorney General of New Mexico.

**Owen N. Marron** was mayor from 1899-1901. A prominent attorney in Albuquerque who went on to become New Mexico's first State Treasurer in 1912, Marron was director of the Interstate Casualty Guaranty Company. In 1896, Marron served as an alderman before his term as mayor. During Marron's term, Albuquerque's public library began operation in Perkins Hall at the corner of Central and Edith. A new library, now the Special Collections Library, was built on the same spot and opened in 1925.

**Charles F. Myers** was mayor of Albuquerque in 1902-1903. Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Myers came to Albuquerque in 1889. In St. Louis, Myers worked for twelve years in a hardware firm that serviced locomotives. Once in Albuquerque, Myers began working in a similar capacity for E. J. Post Co., which specialized in hardware and also sold stoves, tinware, farming implements, and sporting goods.

In 1891, Myers took over partial ownership of the company until 1894, when Mr. Post retired and Myers took over outright. During his tenure as mayor, Myers testified before congress in favor of New Mexico's statehood, attesting to the trustworthiness of "the Mexican," saying, "there is one thing about the Mexican, as a rule: he will, as a rule, pay his bills." When questioned about Albuquerque's municipal affairs, he reassured Congress, "we conduct our affairs here very much in the ways they do back East."

From 1904-1908, **Frank McKee** was mayor of Albuquerque. Originally from Knoxville, Tennessee, McKee grew up in Nashville but lived in Albuquerque for approximately thirty years. McKee worked for more than twenty years at the First National Bank. He had business holdings including the Albuquerque Lumber Company and General Investment Company, and he was involved with First Savings Bank and Trust Company and Occidental Life Insurance Company. American Lumber Company was a main supplier of the sawmill, and was the city's largest employer. The company owned a large tract of virgin white pine forest in the Zuni Mountains that they logged. In addition to his tenure as mayor, McKee served as City Treasurer from 1894-1895. He also held two terms as City Alderman.

**Felix H. Lester** was mayor of Albuquerque from 1908-1912. He graduated from Princeton University and moved to Albuquerque in 1894. Shortly after arriving, he aligned himself with brother-in-



(left) Albuquerque's first library, in what was Perkins Hall, and its successor, the Special Collections library (right) that still stands today at Central and Edith. Photos courtesy Albuquerque Museum.



Photo courtesy Center for Southwest Research. Owen N. Marron is seventh from the left, standing. Another future mayor, Frank McKee, is ninth from the left, standing.



Photo of Felix H. Lester, courtesy Center for Southwest Research, UNM

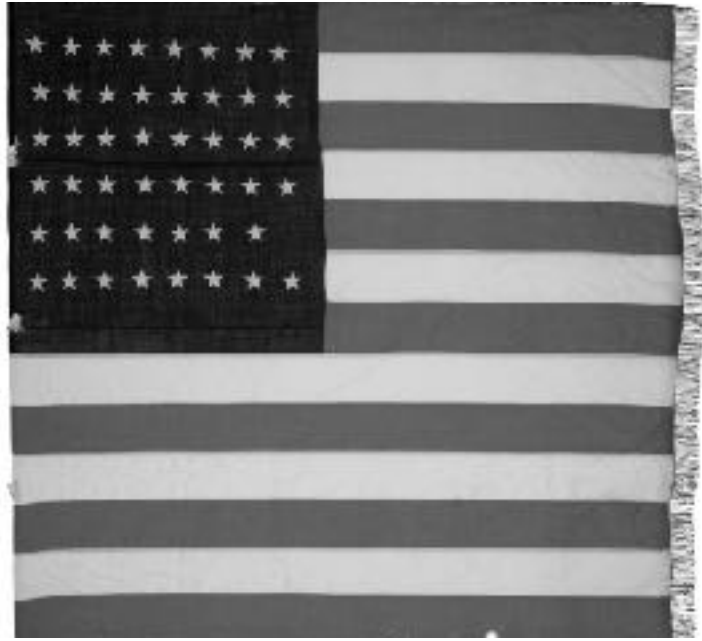
law and former mayor, Neil Field. Lester became prominent, too, first as mayor and then as City Attorney. During his tenure as mayor, he approved a contract for the city's first paved roads.

### *Statehood Period*

In 1912, [New Mexico became the forty-seventh state of the United States of America](#). For the first time in its history, New Mexico had the right to elect its own governor along with other key officials. However, Albuquerque continued to elect its mayors as it had done before. At this time, Native Americans and women were still not allowed to vote. State Librarian, **Lola Chávez de Armijo**, won a lawsuit against the governor of New Mexico, who tried to remove her from her position after declaring women



**J.W. Elder, photo courtesy Center for Southwest Research, UNM.**



**47-star flag, c. 1912, photo courtesy Albuquerque Museum, #PC2008.19.1**



**An early photo of Albuquerque's City Hall, courtesy Albuquerque Museum.**



were not qualified to hold office. The New Mexico Supreme Court ruled in her favor and legislation was passed that allowed women to hold appointed office.

**J. W. Elder** was mayor of Albuquerque in 1912. Elder was also a graduate of Princeton University and Western Pennsylvania Medical College. In 1893, he came to Albuquerque and was head of hospital work for the Santa Fe Railway. In 1903, Elder was appointed chief surgeon of the Albuquerque Eastern Railway. Elder held office as City Physician from 1902-1906. Later in life, he was surgeon in charge of Santa Fe Coast Lines Hospital, at 816 S. Broadway, and served as a major in the army in World War I. Elder was a member of several clubs and societies, as Vice President of the New Mexican Medical Society, and as a member of the Sons of the American Revolution and the Commercial Club.

**Colonel D. K. B. Sellers** was mayor of Albuquerque from 1915-1916. Originally from Ohio, Sellers moved to Albuquerque in 1902. Not actually a colonel, Sellers was given the title by a friend who was Governor of California. Sellers was involved in numerous businesses in Albuquerque—development, bricklaying, printing, telephone communications, insurance, and transportation among them. Sellers and his business partner, Greer, were principal owners of Albuquerque’s railbus system. During his career, Sellers is credited with changing the name of Railroad Avenue to Central Avenue. He served as director of Albuquerque Territorial Fair, concurrent with his term as mayor, during which he tried to organize a “Cowboy versus Indians” faux dispute. The event was cancelled when Diné people cast as Indians loaded their guns with live bullets. Sellers’ accomplishments included paving Central Avenue and building a new City Hall on 2nd Street. He was a strong advocate for the development of infrastructure to support the car. After his tenure as mayor, Sellers served as a state senator and developed property in Nob Hill and the University Area—about half the land area in the city at that time. Sellers is perhaps most remembered for development work in [Nob Hill](#), which he imagined as a place for upper class Anglos and health seekers.

**David H. Boatright** was mayor in 1915-1916. Originally from Sedalia, Missouri, Boatright spent his early career employed in the shops of the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company, where he worked as a painter. Boatright came to Albuquerque in 1881 and was employed by the Atlantic and Pacific Railway as a foreman car painter. He was employed by G. B. Simmons, the first master mechanic for that railway. After a brief return to Missouri, Boatright went on to own his own general store on Gold Avenue called The Racker. Boatright ran against Sellers in the mayoral election and campaigned to close downtown’s red light district. He won the mayoral election with the backing of the *Albuquerque Morning Bulletin*, and the city outlawed prostitution. Sex workers were forced to move to Old Town where the city rule did not apply. As mayor, Boatright also set up an association to safeguard the interests of building and loan organizations. Later in life, he was a commissioner for the New Mexico State Penitentiary and opened the Boatright Rubber Company.

In 1917, citizens vote to establish a commission/manager form of government in Albuquerque, the first city in New Mexico to do so. The new form created nonpartisan elections and the Office of City Manager. **Gertrude Brodell** was Albuquerque’s first City Clerk, and one of the first women to hold public office.

**Henry Westerfeld** was mayor of Albuquerque in 1917. Westerfeld was co-owner, with his brother Gustav Westerfeld, of the Affidavit Cigar Company. He was also treasurer of the German *Einigkeit* Lodge. Westerfeld was elected, according to William A. Keleher, an Albuquerque attorney and politician, because his cigars “had favor with voters.” Keleher says, “those who were well acquainted

with Mayor Westerfeld and his ways advised all those preparing to call on the mayor to discuss business or professional matters, to approach his honor puffing away on an Affidavit cigar, and to be sure to address him as ‘Mr. Mayor’.”

**Charles F. Wade** was Albuquerque’s mayor in 1917-1918. The influenza pandemic was at its height during his term. Before moving to Albuquerque, Wade was heavily involved in the cement industry. He moved to Albuquerque to join the management of Frank McKee’s American Lumber Co.

In 1917, the City of Albuquerque changed from a mayoral system to a City Commissioner system. This system created a nonpartisan commission of three members to run the city. The first commission was made up of **Wade, Walter Connell, and J.M. Raynolds**. During their time leading, the trio created an office of a full-time health officer.

**John T. McLaughlin** was City Commissioner of Albuquerque in 1919. Early in his career, he was a commissioner of Santa Fe County and treasurer of the Santa Fe Central Railway. McLaughlin had a substantial career in mining, as superintendent of the Block Coal Mine in Rio Arriba county. He also worked with several other mines and ore companies in San Pedro, New Mexico. Later in life, McLaughlin was on the Board of Penitentiary Commissioners. In 1921, Albuquerque voters recalled McLaughlin, along with Commissioners Connell and Raynolds, because the three had fired members of the fire department who joined the fireman’s union. Union leaders’ petitions spurred the commissioners’ recall.

Though they were still not inhabiting many leadership positions in Albuquerque yet, New Mexican women who were not Native Americans became eligible to vote as a result of the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920.

**Walter M. Connell** was City Commissioner of Albuquerque, leading the city from 1919-1922. Originally from New York, Connell was educated at Fordham and worked for two years at the National City Bank of New York before moving to the Southwest in 1900 to treat what he thought was tuberculosis but was actually severe bronchitis. Connell married **Emma Huning** and went into business with her brother. Their company, the Huning-Connell Mercantile Company, sold hay, alfalfa, wood, hides, and pelts. Later, together with prominent businessman Frank Bond, Connell formed the Bond-Connell Sheep & Wool Company. He was involved in the wool industry, as well, and served as Secretary of the Woolgrowers Association and President of the Sheep Sanitary Board. In 1921, Albuquerque voters recalled Connell, along with Commissioners McLaughlin and Raynolds, due to their firing members of the fire department who had joined the fireman’s union. Around this time, Albuquerque was the first city in New Mexico to surpass 10,000 people. Women leaders at this time include **Miss Irene Burke** who ran for Bernalillo County Superintendent as a Democrat.

**William R. Walton** was City Commissioner of Albuquerque in 1922. Walton was a prominent photographer turned coal merchant. He took portraits, as well as many photos of Native American society. In 1912, he sold his photography equipment to “devote time to promotion of invention.” His wife was president of the League of Women Voters. During his term in 1922, the first skyscraper went up in Albuquerque, the nine-story First National Bank Building at Third and Central.

**Edwin Burnham Swope** was City Commissioner for Albuquerque from 1923-1925. Swope was born in Albuquerque, and for much of his career, was a prison warden. Swope worked at the New Mexico State Penitentiary, McNeil Island Federal Penitentiary, and Terre Haute Federal Penitentiary. After his term as commissioner, using his experience as a penologist, Swope served on Arthur Hannett’s campaign



Mayor Edwin Swope



First National Bank, Albuquerque's first skyscraper, photo courtesy Albuquerque Museum.

for governor of New Mexico. Later Swope was elected to be New Mexico Commissioner of Public Lands. From 1948-1955, Swope was warden of Alcatraz, where he eased some of the institution's strict rules but was generally disliked because he was condescending and created mistrust among guards. During his term at city commissioner, Native Americans gained citizenship in 1924.

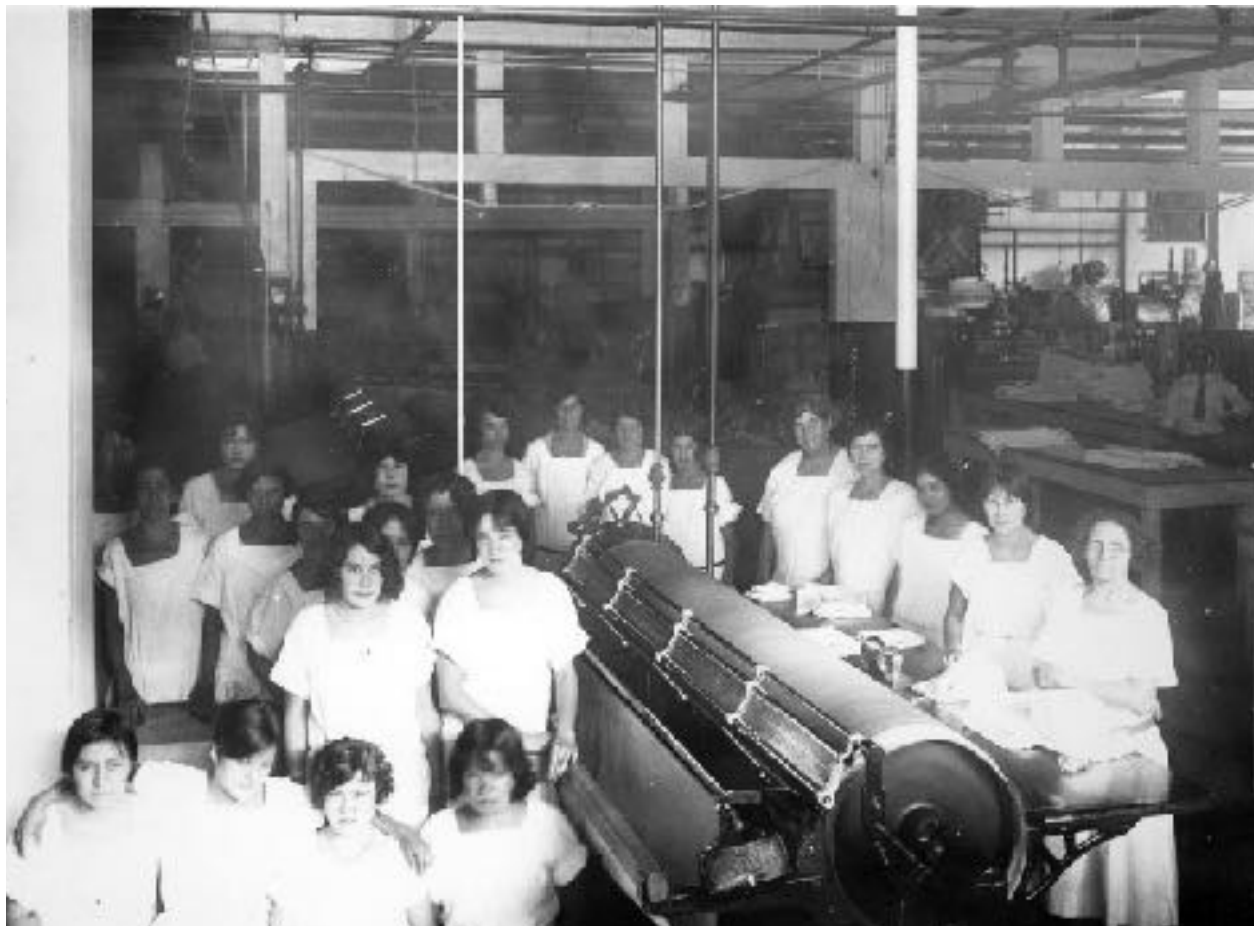
**Clyde K. Tingley** was City Commissioner from 1925-1935. The Tingleys moved to Albuquerque from Ohio due to Ms. Tingley's tuberculosis. Tingley was a New Deal progressive who enacted many of FDR's policies. He was later Governor of New Mexico.

Tingley's first era marked an artistic boom in Albuquerque. In 1927, Oreste Bachechi built the [KiMo Theater](#), which got its name from the Governor of Isleta Pueblo, Pablo Abeita. *Kimo* means "king or best of its kind." Albuquerque also launched its first radio station, KGGM, and the Albuquerque Little Theater opened in 1930. The "Greenwich Village Group" acted around Old Town Plaza in the early 1930s. In 1932, the Albuquerque Civic Symphony began playing. The first concert was conducted by its founder, **Grace Thompson**, Head of the UNM Music Department.

Other major happenings of this era included the designation of U. S. Highway 66 (Rt 66) in 1926 and the creation of the Rio Grande Zoo in 1927. In 1928, Albuquerque constructed its first airport, Oxnard Field, on the mesa, before the Stock Market crashed in 1929. In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" programs began to be funded in cities across the U.S. Albuquerque benefitted greatly through the federal program, which put thousands to work on Works Progress Administration projects in the city.



**Photo of Albuquerque women, early 1920s, courtesy Albuquerque Museum.**



**Photo of Albuquerque laundresses, early 1920s, courtesy Albuquerque Museum.**





Photo of conductor Grace Thompson, courtesy Albuquerque Museum.



Above: (1) photo of Clyde Tingley at KAGM radio, courtesy Albuquerque Museum, (2) Albuquerque Little Theater. At left: early images of the KiMo Theater, all courtesy Albuquerque Museum. Below: a camel at the early Rio Grande Zoo, courtesy Albuquerque Museum Archives.





Photos of early Rt. 66 courtesy ABQ Museum Museum.



Photo of Oxnard Field, courtesy Albuquerque Museum Digital Archives #PA1968.001.003



Photo of the early Rio Grande Zoo, courtesy Albuquerque Museum.



Photo of Clyde Oden, courtesy Center for Southwest Research, UNM.

**Charles Henry Lembke** was City Commissioner of Albuquerque from 1935-1938. Lembke had been UNM's first Civil Engineering graduate in May 1912. Lembke served in WW II, and in 1918, the Army falsely informed his family that Charles, a lieutenant, was killed in action. An engineer and contractor, Lembke owned the Lembke Construction Company, which served as general contractor for many homes in downtown Albuquerque's Country Club and Huning Highland neighborhoods. He owned several plots of land downtown, including on 6th Street between Haines and Aspen.

**Clyde Elmer Oden** was Albuquerque City Commissioner from 1938-1939. Oden was born in Corsicana, Texas. Once in Albuquerque, he started the largest Buick dealership in the city and became involved in Democratic politics. Concurrent to his term as City Commissioner, Oden was president of the Chamber of Commerce. During this era, the state fair opened in 1938. Albuquerque's first Hilton Hotel was completed in 1939.



Clyde Tingley, right, with Charles Lindbergh,

**Clyde Tingley** returned to the helm as City Commissioner of Albuquerque from 1939-1946. In 1940, Albuquerque's population reached 35,000. The following year, the Army Air Corps Flying School began to train flying fortress crews. It was renamed Kirtland Field in 1942. In 1943, Chinese immigrants were allowed to become citizens and vote. The first atomic explosion was on July 15, 1945.

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**Albert E. Buck** won election over opponent Tingley in 1946, signifying a change of political tides in the city. At this time, Sandia Laboratories was soon to locate in the city, which put suburban development at a fever pitch.

Specifically, developers catered to white, highly educated, politically conservative, middle class newcomers to the city. Downtown was abandoned as a center of commerce in favor of stores in the Northeast Heights. Buck, a Republican, ran against Tingley on the platform of continued city investment in the expansion of the Heights. Tingley, on the other hand, wanted to reinvest in downtown and minority services. With the support of newcomers, Buck won.

A prominent businessman, Buck owned Rio Grande Steel Products Company and was a partner in the Sandia Lumber Company. Buck, along with his business partner Merle H. Tucker, formerly of KOB, formed Rio Grande Broadcasting Company and filed a petition to create an alternate broadcasting station named KOAT. They went on in 1945 to establish the first broadcast station in Gallup—KGAK. Over the





Photos from the first State Fair of New Mexico in Albuquerque, 1939, courtesy ABQ Museum. Top: Entrance tower #PA1980.061.261. Bottom: Horses on their way to the fair #PA1999.005.227.



Hilton Hotel, photo courtesy ABQ Museum, #PA1980.061.253



Army Air Corps Flying School, photo courtesy Albuquerque Museum.



**First atomic explosion, July 15, 1945, photo courtesy Albuquerque Museum**

course of the next five years, Buck and Tucker consolidated the stations they controlled, among them KOAT Albuquerque, KGAK Gallup, KTRC Santa Fe, and KRSN Los Alamos. Buck was also an inventor. With Harley H. Bashor, he patented a chassis frame designed for house trailers. Buck and his wife were killed in an airplane accident in 1951.

**Frank W. Darrow** served two terms on the City Commission, beginning in 1947. His reelection was marred by political in-fighting between Tingley and Albert Buck. He was a captain in the New Mexico National Guard and involved in the USO.

Longtime Albuquerque politico, **Clyde Tingley**, was back as City Commissioner from 1951-54. During this term, the College of St. Joseph opened and became the University of Albuquerque. In 1952, the City Commission passed an anti-discrimination ordinance. The state followed suite three years later.

**Ernest W. Everly** was City Commissioner from 1948-1951. During his tenure, New Mexico granted Native Americans the right to register and vote on August 3, 1948. Old Town Albuquerque was incorporated in 1949.

**Maurice Sánchez** was commissioner of Albuquerque from 1954-1962. During his time, the UNM College of Medicine opened in 1956. The city also created a historic zone to preserve the unique architectural character of the Old Town District. The Winrock Center shopping mall opened in 1961.

**Archie Westfall** served as City Commissioner of Albuquerque from 1962-1966. Industry continued to flourish with the opening of the Coronado Center in 1963.



**Harry Kinney, Albuquerque's first official "mayor," courtesy ABQ Museum #PA1986.002.090.**

**Ralph S. Trigg** was City Commissioner in 1966, when the Big I interchange was built to reroute I-40 and I-25. The Sandia Tramway, the longest tram of its kind in North America, was built also built during Trigg's term. The rerouting of I-40 and I-25 resulted in the "Big I" interchange in 1966. Trigg served till 1967.

**Pete V. Domenici** was City Commissioner of Albuquerque from 1967-1970 before going on to become a long serving senator for New Mexico. In 1969, the Alvarado Hotel was demolished during Domenici's term. Domenici finished out the 1960s as commissioner, before **Charles E. Barnhart** served as City Commissioner from 1970 to 1971. In 1971, **Nancy Koch** became the first woman to be elected to the Albuquerque City Commission. According to the *Albuquerque Journal* she was one of thirty candidates.

**Harry E. Kinney** was first elected to the city commission in 1966 and was chairman from 1971-73. In 1972, Kinney launched the first Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, where thirteen





**Photo of College of St. Joseph, courtesy ABQ Museum.**



**Photo of Old Town District, courtesy ABQ Museum.**



**Photos of Winrock Shopping Center, courtesy Albuquerque Museum.**

balloons flew from the Coronado Center parking lot as KOB Radio celebrated its fiftieth Anniversary.

The city then had a string of commissioners including **Louis E. Saavedra** (1973), **Ray R. Baca** (1973-74) and **Richard G. Vaughn** (1974).

Kinney was back for a second term leading the city, from 1974-1977, when a new government was formed with a full-time mayor and a nine-member city council in 1974. The following year, in 1975, the city developed its first comprehensive plan. Kinney would serve as mayor again from 1981-1985. A mechanical engineer, Kinney championed the Elena Gallegos Land Grant encouraging public open spaces, the first bike trail, and the first senior center.



**Sandia Tramway being built, photos courtesy Albuquerque Museum.**



**Photo of the construction of the "Big I" interchange, 1969, photo courtesy Albuquerque Museum PA1996.029.279**



**(Top) Photo of the Alvarado Hotel demolition (1969), courtesy Albuquerque Museum. (Bottom) Albuquerque City Council meeting, photo by Walter McDonald, courtesy ABQ Museum, PA1996.029.437**





**Two-time Mayor of Albuquerque Martin Chavez.**



**Mayor Richard J. Berry, photo by Kim Jew.**

**David Rusk** was elected mayor of Albuquerque for the 1977-1981 term. Rusk emphasized mass transit, conservation, improved city services, and rescuing downtown. He created a system of surveying and identifying downtown buildings.

**Mary Coon Walters** becomes the first female justice on New Mexico's Supreme Court in 1984. She was followed by Pamela B. Minzner, who became the first female Chief Justice of the New Mexico Supreme Court in 1999.

**Louis E. Saavedra** was mayor from 1989-93, after previously serving as a City Commissioner in the 1970s.

In 1995, U.S. Route 66 was decommissioned because of the construction of I-40 as the main East-West artery for travelers through the city.

**Martin Chávez** served his first term as mayor from 1993-1997 and his second from 2001-2009, the first "modern mayor" to be elected to two-consecutive terms. A businessman and attorney, Chavez was a state senator from 1987-1993; he ran unsuccessfully for Governor of New Mexico in 1998, U.S. Senate in 2008, and U.S. House 2012. During his tenure as mayor, UNM, Sandia Labs, and leaders in business and education established the high achieving Albuquerque Institute of Math and Science. Chávez made the environment and sustainability leading issues during his leadership of the city.

**Ken Schultz** was Mayor from 1985-1989, after serving on City Council. He was later indicted on mail fraud in a scandal involving the construction of the courthouse. **Jim Baca** served as mayor between Chávez's two terms, from 1997-2001. Baca brought the minor league baseball team, the Albuquerque Isotopes (previously a Calgary baseball team), to town and created Isotopes Park for the team to play in.

**Richard J. Berry** defeated the incumbent Chavez to serve two terms as mayor of Albuquerque from 2009-2011. A former two-term state representative, Berry was the first Republican mayor of Albuquerque in thirty years. During his administration, the 93-million dollar Paseo del Norte and I-25 interchange project was completed. His administration was plagued by criticism around the public transit construction of the ART bus project and excessive use of force cases against APD investigated by DOJ.



In 2017, Albuquerque voters elected **Timothy M. Keller** as mayor. After a successful career working internationally in social technology enterprises for Fortune 500 companies, Keller returned to his home city of Albuquerque to enter public service. Before becoming mayor, Keller served as a state senator for the International District and as New Mexico State Auditor.

During Keller's term, in November 2018, Albuquerque voters made Deb Haaland the first Native American woman to be elected to the U. S. Congress. In March 2020, the first cases of COVID-19 were diagnosed in Albuquerque, prompting Mayor Keller to officially declare a State of Emergency and introduce health mandates to slow the spread of the virus in the city. This emergency declaration would become the longest in effect in the city's 312-year history. While the pandemic raged on nationally in 2021, Congresswoman Haaland became the first indigenous U.S. cabinet secretary when President Biden named her Secretary of the Interior.

Keller's tenure was marked by an expansion of the film industry in the city, with Netflix and Universal Studios bolstering studios in Albuquerque in square footage and shoots. Keller focused on reimagining policing, as well, hiring the city's first Superintendent of Police Reform. Crime initiatives included the creation of the Community Safety Department, the Violence Intervention Program, clearing a 3,000 rape kit testing backlog, and working with feds on APD oversight as a result of the Department of Justice case from 2014. The administration also focused on climate and sustainability. Keller committed to using 100% renewable energy for municipal operations by 2030, with the city set to reach 80% renewable by 2022. He committed to six projects to reduce carbon as a winner in the American Climate Cities Challenge and as part of his 2021 Climate Action Plan.



**Congresswoman Deborah Haaland, photo courtesy Albuquerque Museum Digital Archives.**



**Mayor Tim Keller (2017), courtesy City of Albuquerque**

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