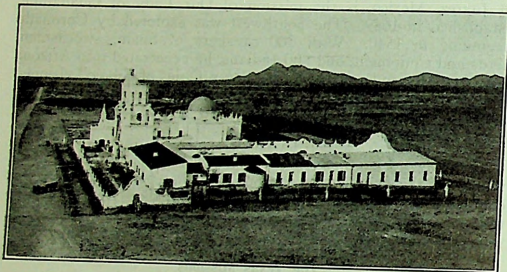


The Arizona Missions

Before the missions were begun around San Antonio others were building between Nogales and Tucson, Arizona—the Mission of San Xavier del Bac, founded in 1700, is claimed "more beautiful and interesting than any other in the country." Four missions were in that section beginning 1692 and eleven others south of Nogales in the present Mexico. Many of these churches still remain but long years of labor and preparation passed between the founding of a mission and the completion of those artistic structures of stone and cement that became the monuments to the faith of that age. Indian converts made the works possible and other Indians ravaged and broke them down while faith reared them again. It wasn't a land of plenty but of desert sands.



MISSION SAN XAVIER DEL BAC

Nine miles south of Tucson, Arizona, at the reservation of the Indians, in charge of the Franciscans.

Much of the Old Spanish Trail in Arizona runs down the valley of the Salt and the Gila Rivers to Yuma, the gateway to California. Through all the centuries westward marches of the Spaniard and of the Anglo-Saxon have flowed over this trail, peopling the California shores and crowning that land with a romance as eternal as that that lives along the Old Spanish Trail to Florida.

The Beginning of California

In Southern California are old missions again. San Diego, 1769, was the first. Then they were built "a day's journey apart" on northward beyond San Francisco, a total of twenty-one.

San Diego is the beginning of California as St. Augustine, the other and eastern terminal of the highway, is the beginning of Florida. The first wooden cross was planted at San Diego and

the Indians were taught to labor and construct the first church. The soil was taught to serve—Indians, irrigation, seed and the leadership of the padres gave California the palm, the vine, the olive, grain, foodstuff, grazing for the sheep and cattle, and all the needs for the comfortable communal life the missions fostered. There was raised the first flag; there the ruins of old adobe buildings; there the old mission bells which were brought from Spain; there the old enclosure of Ramona's marriage place and dreams of other Alessandros and other Ramonas whose pictures, perhaps, are seen in the Wishing Well.

Reminders of the Centuries of Occupation

Reminders of the Spanish are all along the highway. In the west are the great works of the padres, the relics of the conquistadores and the fascinating legends and tales of those days. In the east are things that tell of the tragedies of knights and princes and peasants who passed golden opportunities by for the lure of gold, farther, ever farther, on. And there, too, are the tales of great Indian nations whose resistance shed glory on their name and laid the proud standards of Spain in the shambles of defeat.

The glory of the explorer has dimmed with time, but the labor of the priests and their old missions still speak of the past and the Old Spanish Trail now makes appeal that it may revive the story of the old Spanish days when this New World was a wilderness and men braved the unknown to solve its secrets.

French and Spanish in Old Louisiana

For 200 years the Spaniards sailed the Gulf of Mexico and held it as a Spanish lake. Argosies laden with gold sailed over it and filled the years with romance and adventure. Expeditions sought new sources of riches but the Spaniards passed by the empire the Mississippi River embraced. De Soto discovered and crossed the mighty Father of Waters, and while dying begged his followers to subject it to the flag of Spain. But the perishing remnants of that expedition sought Mexico to the west then returned and built barges to escape down the Mississippi River while the Indians followed in great canoes assailing and mocking them. They left to La Salle, the French Canadian from Quebec 140 years later, the distinction of claiming the vast territory the Spanish might have commanded had they followed the river up from the Gulf. In 1699, seventeen years later, a French expedition colonized Louisiana, making the first settlement at Biloxi, the Mississippi Coast section of the highway, and the French occupation split the Spanish domain in two. Later the Louisiana of the French was subjected to the standards of Spain and the Castilian period of New Orleans has left its impress for all time.

After the American Revolution France again controlled