

De Soto landed at Tampa Bay in 1539 and with 1,000 men, 213 horses and a remarkable equipment, including chains and collars for enslaving the Indians, he explored the southern country to the western bounds of Arkansas, then returned to the Mississippi River, where he died. Several hundred half-naked Spaniards reached the present Tampico four years after the proud landing at Tampa Bay. St. Augustine, settled in 1565, is the oldest city in the United States and the old Spanish atmosphere there is St. Augustine's charm.

Pensacola lays claim to being older than St. Augustine based on De Luna's expedition of colonists and priests, greater in ships and people than De Soto's, which landed at Pensacola Bay in 1559. The Indians however, by force and strategy, soon disrupted the enterprise and the colonists returned to Vera Cruz.

Parties were working northward from Mexico during the same period Florida was being penetrated. In 1582-83 the Espejo expedition reached the Texas country. Later the Spanish reached inland to Santa Fe, the second oldest city in the United States. A census in existence of 1605 shows a population of 1708. Cruzale colonized at Santa Fe and sought to build permanent works.

In 1683-84 Mendoza went north from Mexico through the Big Bend country of Texas; was at Comanche Springs (Fort Stockton), and penetrated to and established a Mission on the San Saba River, where later a silver mine and Spanish fort were located. This is 38 miles north of the Trail from Junction, Texas. Old aqueducts and other works still endure. The San Saba Trail developed from San Antonio through the Spanish Pass near Boerne to this fort. Others branched westward to El Paso and southward into Mexico. Those were the days of mule and pack-trains between San Antonio and Chihuahua, both then a part of New Spain and later of Mexico.

The first Isleta and seat of missions is on the Rio Grande near Albuquerque. The younger Ysleta on the Trail near El Paso is by some thought older than Santa Fe. Just across the international bridge from El Paso in Jaurez, Mexico, is the mission of Our Lady of Guadalupe, erected early in the 16th century. Today in that ancient mission the Mexican descendants of the Spaniards and Indians who followed Coronado still bow knee to the cross that led the hosts. That section was explored by Coronado as early as 1540. With 300 cavaliers of Old

Spain, swordsmen, herds and equipment, and 800 Indians, he penetrated into Arizona and New Mexico hunting for the "Seven Cities of Cibolo" visioned as cities of gold. Then he sought for the Kingdom of the Gran Quivera thru Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, another fabled land of gold and silver.

These were not mere bodies of adventurers, but expeditions worthy of the greatness of the Spain of that period. Coronado's contact with the Indians was more merciful than De Soto's. To the everlasting glory of the Florida natives they faced their mounted and armored oppressors and died defending their homes. It required chains and bloodhounds and overpowering armament to enslave them.

San Antonio became the center for missions in 1718 when the mission that became the historic Alamo was established there and San Antonio became the seat of the diocese of San Antonio. The Franciscan Fathers planted a score of missions in Texas, at Goliad, Victoria, San Antonio, Nacogdoches, Menard, Uvalde and along the Rio Grande at El Paso del Norte. The old missions around San Antonio are revelations in art and architecture and like all the old missions, they are more than remarkable for such a primitive and wilderness location.

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 1692, is claimed "more beautiful and interesting than any other in the country." Nearby and older than San Xavier is the picturesque ruin of San Jose de Tumacacori, now being reclaimed for preservation.

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

In Southern California are old missions again. On the Trail are San Diego, 1769; San Juan Capistrano, 1776; Los Angeles, 1771, and others "a day's journey apart" on northward, a total of twenty-one.

At San Diego history and romance win the hearts of the visitors, for San Diego stands as the beginning of California. The first wooden