



The Origin of the "Old Spanish Trail"

In October 1915, a group of Alabama-Mississippi-Louisiana good roads enthusiasts met in Mobile and took the name "Old Spanish Trail Highway Association." The association aimed to build a highway along the Gulf Coast connecting Mobile, Pascagoula, Gautier, Ocean Springs, Biloxi, Mississippi City, Gulfport, Long Beach, Pass Christian, Bay St. Louis, and New Orleans. All of those towns and cities had rail connections to the nation and water routes to the world, but coastal roads were scarcely better than those of colonial times.

Blocked to the east by the marshes of the Pearl River Delta and Honey Island Swamp, and to the north by Lake Pontchartrain, New Orleans was served by no thoroughfare worthy of the name "highway." The River Road along the Mississippi River connected the city to Baton Rouge and points north. Another road wended its way to Morgan City, but both Morgan City and Baton Rouge were bordered by vast swamps on the west.

The Old Spanish Trail Highway Association, within a few months of its formation,