

some cities contributed heavily to such organizations in order to increase their chances of being on proposed routes. Most of the organizations were legitimate, but some were nothing more than scams run by confidence men. In time the legitimate highway associations would become so powerful that they would influence state legislatures and the national Congress.

The Jackson Highway, because its avowed aim was to memorialize Andrew Jackson, would, of course, pass through Nashville (Jackson's home) and terminate at New Orleans (the scene of Jackson's great victory over the British). Why it would begin in Buffalo, New York, is not known to this author. The Jackson Highway pathfinders were in Mobile the day that the *Mobile Register* printed the article about the formation of the Old Spanish Trail. Perhaps because the Jackson Highway pathfinders were in Mobile wrestling with the decision of whether to advocate a southern route of the highway from Nashville through the city of Jackson, Mississippi, or through Jackson County, Mississippi (both named for Andrew Jackson), the Mobilians decided to throw down the gauntlet. The eastern terminus of the Old Spanish Trail was perfunctorily given as Miami in the proclamation and the western terminus was nebulous, but the Mobile to New Orleans route across the Mississippi Gulf Coast was a certainty. Once the Old Spanish Trail Highway Association formed, the route of the Jackson Highway became more or less irrelevant.

On October 26, three days after the initial article, the *Mobile Register* announced that the Old Spanish Trail Highway Association wished to host a meeting in Mobile of representatives from Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. The specific towns in Mississippi from which representatives were desired were Pascagoula, Ocean Springs, Biloxi, Gulfport, Pass Christian, Bay St. Louis, Pearlinton, and Logtown. On October 28, the paper announced that E. B. Dunten of Pascagoula and George W. Grayson of Biloxi had been named Old Spanish Trail officers for Mississippi.

Grayson, who was president of the Biloxi Commercial Club, had been an officer of the Alabama-Gulf Coast Highway Association. Apparently all the good roads advocates of the region were being pulled into the new association, which was supplanting their old organizations.

Mobile hosted 410 delegates at the first convention of the Old Spanish Trail Highway Association on Saturday, December 11, 1915. A second convention was announced for Pensacola for February 1916. Thus began America's first Deep South-based transcontinental highway association.

James A. Emmett, field secretary of the Old Spanish Trail, sent a letter to Gulfport Mayor George M. Foote in January 1916 chiding the Mississippi Coast people for going into "spasms of delight over the Jackson Highway which will never be more than a feeder to the Old Spanish Trail." Emmett then urged Foote to do more to build the front beach road up as a section of the coming Old Spanish Trail. Foote upon receipt of the letter exclaimed, "Evidently [Emmett] does not know that Harrison County has just recently issued bonds in the amount of \$250,000 with which to build a first-class highway across the beach front. Harrison County could not do more than it is now doing."