

The first account of these roads we find in Roberts' "Florida," published in London in 1763. In describing the Gulf shore near the present St. Marks, Roberts says:

"There is a road over land from the mouth of this river to St. Augustin, which is as follows: Ocon is fifteen miles from St. Marks, and ten miles beyond is Ayavalla fort; twenty-four miles further is Machalla, and eleven miles from that is St. Matheo; both these are situated on branches of the Rio Vassa, which is about eighty miles in length, and enters the Gulf of Mexico fifteen miles southeast of St. Marks. Twenty-five miles from St. Matheo is San Pedro, on the south side of the River San Pedro, which is 100 miles long and enters the Gulf of Mexico seventy miles from St. Marks; eleven miles from San Pedro is Utoca, and in twelve miles more we come to Nuvoalla, situated on the east side of the Carolinian River, the course of which has not been ascertained, but there is good reason to suppose that it runs a south course into the Rio Amasura. Eight miles from Nuvoalla is Alochua, and in eight miles more we come to Jurla Noca. All these places were formerly ancient settlements of the Atimucas Indians, who were driven from them by the English from Carolina in 1706, and have fixed their settlement on an island to the east of the Rio de St. Juan, about sixty-five miles southwest of St. Augustine, and call their chief settlement Pueblo de Atimuca. Twenty-six miles from Jurla Noca we come to a Spanish settlement on the banks of the Rio de St. Juan. Though the river is here only two miles broad, yet it is eight miles over that and two islands to Fort Picolata, which is the last stage, and is thirty miles distant from Fort St. Augustine. This road is 188 miles from St. Marks."

From the map — in this book — of the territory traversed by this highway, we note that it ran nearly north-east from St. Marks through Ocon and Ayavalla, then turned eastward and followed very nearly the 30th degree of latitude to its destination. This would have brought it, when turned into the later St. Augustine - Pensacola Highway, to the country south of Tallahassee, where later writers have reported noting the road. The map in this work shows the 30th degree of latitude some twenty miles further north than it actually is, and this has to be taken into account in locating the road as described by later writers.

The next traveler through north Florida to report upon this road was William Bartram, who traversed this section of Florida in 1774-75, and published in 1791 a very full and interesting account of the natural history and antiquities thereof. From his work we take the following account of this highway: