

PRESERVING THE OLD SPANISH TRAIL NAME

The following news item from the Santa Barbara, California, News of April 14, 1926 was mailed to us:-

CHANGE NAME OF ROAD

The name, "Old Spanish Trail," will no longer be used in designating the famous highway extending from St. Augustine, Florida, to San Diego, California, according to recent information received from the Touring Department of the National Automobile Club. Hereafter it will be designated as "United States Highway Nos. 80 and 90."

The national Joint Board appointed by the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture, head of the Federal Road Bureau, designated the Old Spanish Trail as United States Highway No. 90 in the East; No. 80 in the West. It is right this trunkline should be rated one of the national highways and numbered as such but the name should also be officially fixed and preserved. Some, not all, of the Joint Board are trying to designate numbers only as a way to establish these national routes and rid the country of the irresponsible road promoters that have become a nuisance.

The OST also suffers from these "road runners." While you and we have worked to weave this project together across eight states these promoters have sought advantage without giving service, money or value. From 30 to 40 names have been placed along this highway and many thousands of dollars collected. Most of the alleged organizations collected the money and faded away while the Old Spanish Trail Association has spent over \$150,000 and eleven years time helping solve problems and pushing construction gathering, compiling, printing and distributing travel literature and maps and doing many things to build this highway and popularize it.

These highway officials are very properly trying to stop these confusing and worthless promotions but out of the effort the Old Spanish Trail must emerge with its name and integrity forever established and protected.

The intelligence with which this trunkline has been developed across the continent is once more evident in its selection in its entirety as the southern United States Highway. The highway departments of the eight OST States have performed great service in the construction work; they have solved financial and engineering difficulties that have cost years of effort and the highest order of skill. The ultimate achievement however will come when the marking from Florida to California shows both the United States Highway number and the name that is so firmly rooted in the hearts of the people.

Highway officials we have consulted are ready to help plan and put in force the most useful system of marking that can be devised. Many problems are evident. Eight state departments must be consulted. The experience and observation of practical highway leaders must be gathered. Methods of financing must be considered and, finally, practical plans must be agreed upon which will give the traveler the same style of marking and signing along the Old Spanish Trail in all the eight states.