The Old Spanish Trail was not easily transformed into a modern road. Nobile people began in 1915 to promote interact for an autocobile road through the Oulf's Maxico country between New Pleines and the Florida mat Coast. West From New Orle na was a land of darlness to those poorle at that time. It seems apparent a role that could be constructed easily was the first thought rather that to follow the another thail of the Spanish inthers through North Florida. This ancient trail was mear the Gulf of North on Andrews difficult construction for all the historical integrity a modern highway could attain and those cruanders for all the historical integrity a modern highway could attain and those cruanders continued until the modern Old Spanish Trail was officially laid from Florida to continued until the modern Old Spanish real was officially laid from Florida to continued until the land so fite Spanish accounter concerns coloniers, coloniers, coloniers, coloniers, coloniers, coloniers, coloniers, coloniers, scheme than \$100,000,000, assured the pleasures of these Spanish Borderlands to apparent an treat and the place of these spanish Borderlands to apparent an treatment tre

Organization Meeting at Mobile

The convention to organize was at Nobile, Alabama, December 10-11, 1918. It is recorded that 136 delegates were from Florida; 274 from Alabama, one from Mississippi; five from loutisians (Mew Orleans); one from arisespapi; five from Indiagna (Mew Orleans); one from arisespapi; five from Indiagna (Mew Orleans); one from Arisespape or outer or the convention shows that South Georgia was proposed with the old Ming's Highway (Camino Real in Spanish) through North Florida between four free and penacola. Floridians attended the convention in force to secure the adoption of the historic route regardless of physical difficulties and costs presented by those rivers and have of the coastal country. They aloged at Marianna, Florida, and hold a convention of their was and restremously plead their cause and the Old Spanish Trail project as officially attended was laid through Florida or Vobile along the trail of the Spanish Elements. From Hobble to Norleans it followed the trail of the Erench and Sinesera. From Hobble to Norleans it followed the trail of the French and Tables than sea mediators.

They were erusaders then, dreaming dreams as did the crusaders of old. No commercial read arised arises that Gulf of Marico country. The rivers and bays and their basins from New Orleans eastward would require, as present construction shows, over thirty alles of bridges and risakes with costs running into tens of shows, over thirty alles of bridges and regarded highward departments and of State read laws had not yet errived. Decembe of these big maternay the cities and country were units on semi-islands with but little acquaintence with twas a tream of uniteness along those watersays, not across them. It was a tream of uniteness of thin hose for a medern highway through that country. The Spanish conquistaders and naires could travel about in their primitive way but seven wear of to gas before the governments admitted the precisionality of an autonable highway. Then southern exactly for achievement highway and arities were were made available and super-process or and arrest of the supplies the impulses that force progress.

Conditions across the Continent

While Mobile and Florida were crusading for their road some thought this dream-idea should be extended across the continent. A southern national highway was an appealing thought. Moreover, old Spanish history and tradition are strong in the West. But the only route that then seemed possible would run from New Orleans northward to Shreveport, then westward through Dallas and El Paso. This again was the excedient idea of a more northern and less costly route.

The Mississippi River basin west from New Orleans was a barrier one hundred miles wide. South Texas, through Houston and San Antonio to El Paso, nearly one thousand miles wide, consisted largely of cattle ranches and trails. Individual crusaders in that country had not yet arisen.

Southern New Mexico, Arizona and South California was another expansive country, sparsely settled, with comboy and ploneer trails more prevalent than wagon roads. Out there men were then driving and forcing primitive automobiles over deserts, mountains and powdery sands seeking a practical route to connect El Paso and San Diego through the scattered but interesting cities along those western borderlands.

Harry Locke, then of Arizona, became "ield Engineer for the Old Spanish Trail. In those formative years he made many trips across the continent searching ut the proper route. Often, he reports, when making local inquiries he could get directions to the nearest railroad station easier than to snynhmasadama the next town. In those days ferriage in the East totaled, at times, seventy to eighty miles. Eogs in wet weather or harsh ruts and bumpy roads in dry meather called for all the spirit of adventure that lay latent in men's souls. Looking backward, it seems as though something of the fires that burned in the hearts of those Spanish pathfinders [Alshed] again, for local crusaders and adventurous men kept blazing paths toward progress. East of New Orleans conventions were held at Pensacola in 1916 and at Tallahassee in 1917 and enthusiasms were kept alive but the costly road and bridge problems were not being solved.

Louisiana Crusaders at failed and others that successed, and

Men of South Louisiana realized the impropriety of routing the project through North Louisiana and North Texas. The route, by all logic, should stay along the Southern Borderlands despite obstacles and costs. The Shambers of commerce of Lake Charles, Louisiana and of Orange, Texas arranged a conference of representatives from Galveston and Houston to New Orleans in April 1916 and they pledged allegiance if the routing was laid that way. In September 1916 they ran a motorcade of twenty cars to New Orleans, covering the five hundred miles in three and a half days. October 21-22, 1916 they met in convention at Lake Charles. They also were crusaders. The dream of the Mobile Convention of 1915 was now definitely spreading westward. But still South Texas, west from Houston through San Antonio, was a blank. The Old Spanish Trail propaganda map began to show the routing west to Houston, then north to Dallas, then west to El Paso and San Diego---this indicates they were progressing badly, but progressing. In addition, men were rising in South Texas, new crusaders who were to help steer the project into the right course.